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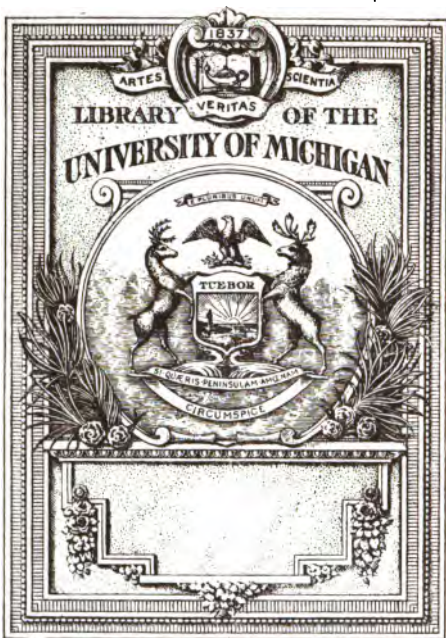
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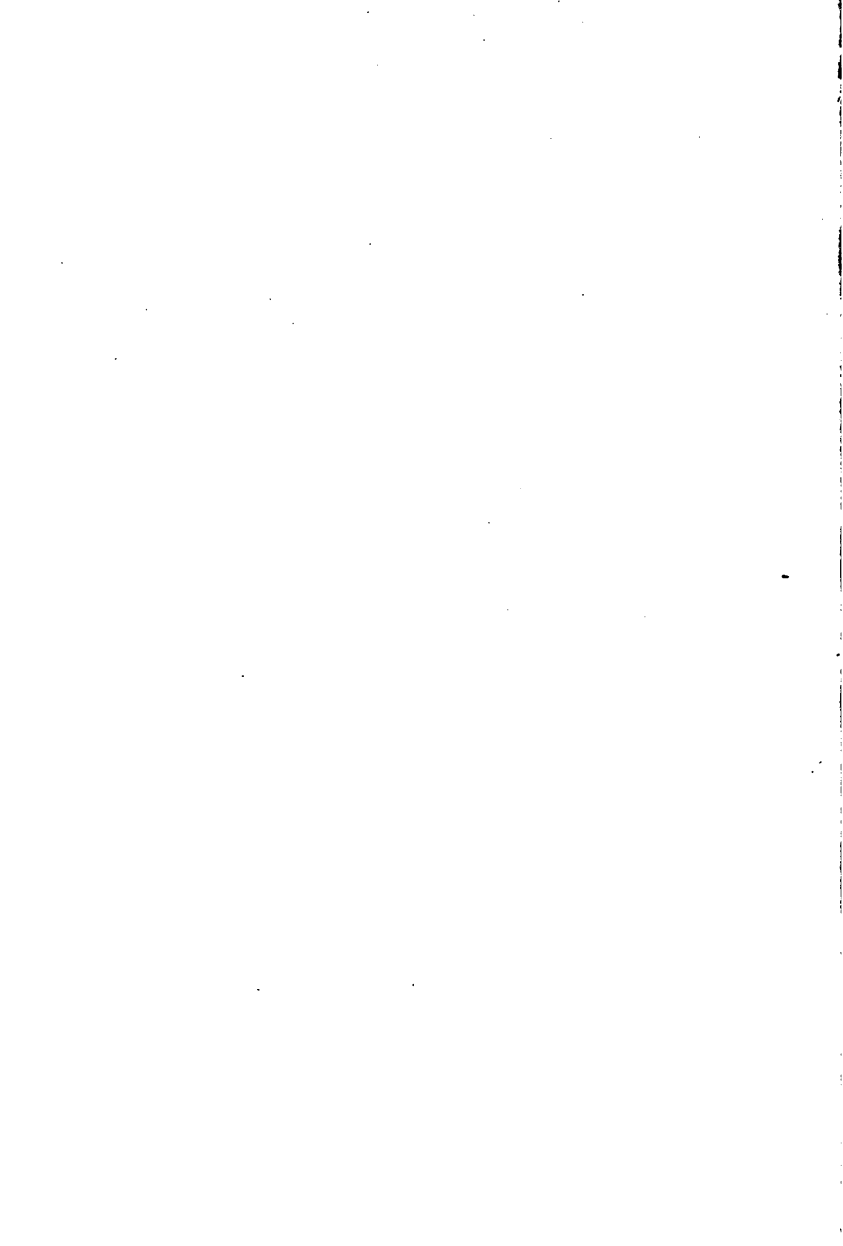
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FRIEDRICH SCHILLER.

*Painted by Anton Graff. Engraved by Johann Gotthard Müller. Schiller sat for this picture in the spring of 1786; Graff, however, did not finish it until 1791. In 1794 Müller engraved the picture to Schiller's satisfaction. (To face p. 1.)*





# Wilhelm Tell

Schauspiel

VON

Friedrich Schiller



EDITED WITH

*INTRODUCTION AND NOTES*

BY

ARTHUR H. PALMER

*Professor in Yale University*



NEW YORK  
HENRY HOLT AND COMPANY

1899





Schiller's Coat of Arms.

*"The last great dramatic work of Schiller—and whether it be not the grandest production of his genius I leave to others to judge—is founded on the most remarkable and beneficent political revolution which, previous to our own, the world had seen,—an event the glory of which belongs solely to the Teutonic race—that ancient vindication of the great right of nationality and independent government, the revolt of Switzerland against the domination of Austria, which gave birth to a republic now venerable with the antiquity of five hundred years. He took a silent page from history, and, animating the personages of whom it speaks with the fiery life of his own spirit, and endowing them with his own superhuman eloquence, he formed it into a living protest against foreign dominion which yet rings throughout the world. Wherever there are generous hearts, wherever there are men who hold in reverence the rights of their fellow-men, wherever the love of country and the love of mankind coexist, Schiller's drama of 'William Tell' stirs the blood like the sound of a trumpet."*—WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT: Address at centennial celebration of Schiller's birth, in Cooper Union, New York City, 1859.

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## PREFACE.

THIS edition of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*, intended especially for schools and colleges, has been made at the request of the publishers. An editor of this drama at the present time must in general move along the same lines with his many predecessors, as regards most of his Introduction and Notes. For these, then, the editor frankly acknowledges that he has made conscientious use of all accessible Schiller-literature—histories, biographies, editions, commentaries—and has drawn freely upon them, especially upon those contained in the Bibliography, Appendix, pp. 282–287.

In the Notes he has endeavored to be concise, to give translations only in cases where the average dictionary is inadequate, and not to stray into the fields of grammar and etymology. On the other hand, the comment in both Introduction and Notes on the structure and development of the plot and on the characters has been made considerably fuller than in any preceding edition. Here the unitary conception of the drama has been favored. Under this general head the editor acknowledges very direct and extensive indebtedness (although at the same time differing from him in important points of view) to H. Gaudig in his most excellent commentary on the drama, contained in the *Wegweiser durch die klassischen Schul-*



*dramen*, Vol. 5, Part 3 of *Aus deutschen Lesebüchern* by O. Frick and others.

Since *Wilhelm Tell* is so often the first classical German drama to be read in our schools, the first division of the Introduction is given to a sketch of some of the main outlines of the great classical period of German literature. The aim here is not so much to impart full information as to suggest the broad literary background before which *Tell* stands, and to awaken interest in the rich treasures of the literature of Germany.

The relations of fact and fiction in history and legend are set forth in the Introduction, more because of the intrinsic importance of the real history of Switzerland than because knowledge of these relations is essential to the understanding and enjoyment of Schiller's drama.

The Text is presented in the standard form, but with the Prussian official orthography. The punctuation retains somewhat freely the dash which Schiller employed so much.

The Vocabulary has been independently made from the text. It is believed that it will meet the desires and the needs of many schools.

A. H. P.

*Yale University, September 18, 1898.*

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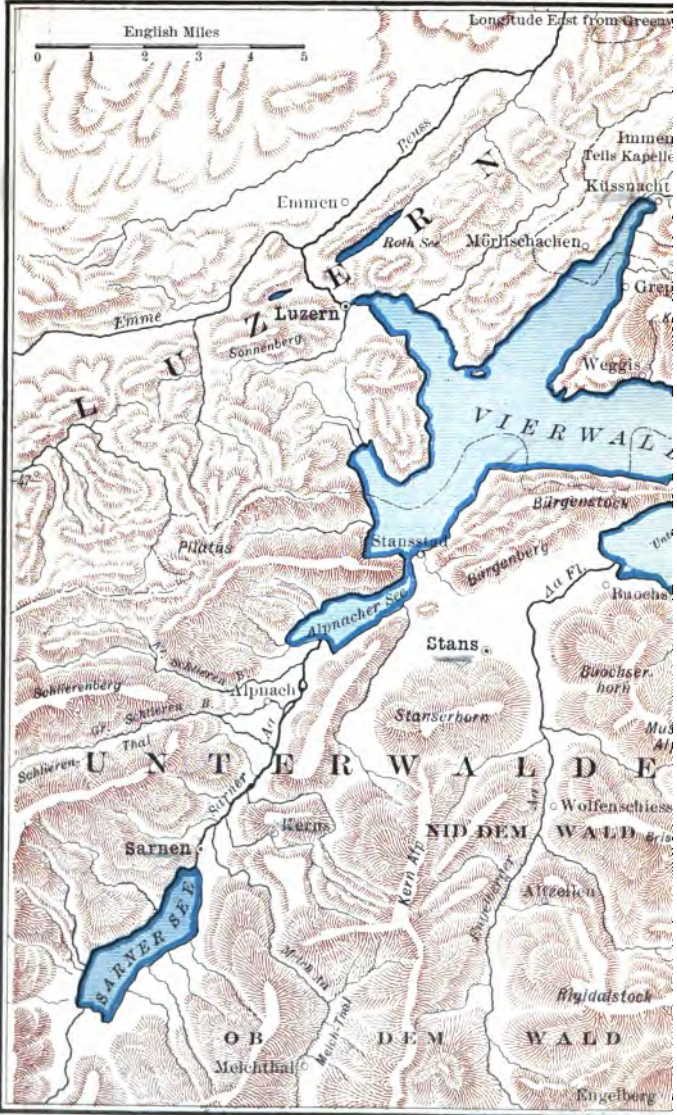




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## INTRODUCTION.

### THE PLACE OF "WILHELM TELL" AND ITS AUTHOR IN GERMAN LITERATURE.

*Wilhelm Tell* is the most popular drama of that author who has been universally known and loved in his own country as no other writer. It opens before us the great classical period of German literature, leading us back to Weimar, where on February 18th, 1804, it was completed and on March 17th first performed.

The region of Thuringia where Weimar\* lies has always been preeminent in favoring the spiritual and national interests of Germany. Landgrave Hermann of the Wartburg was in the thirteenth century a patron of poets, among whom were Wolfram von Eschenbach, the greatest epic poet of his age, and Walther von der Vogelweide, one of the sweetest and strongest lyric poets of all times and tongues; there in the fourteenth

\* Cf. Scherer—*Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, 5th ed. pp. 526 ff., to which in general the editor acknowledges indebtedness, as also to Stein—*Ästhetik der deutschen Klassiker*, Julian Schmidt—*Geschichte der deutschen Litteratur*, and other current authorities.



century the drama proved its power, and there in the sixteenth century Luther, translating the New Testament, laid the foundations of the language of all later writers. The Weimar princes in the seventeenth century took part in organized movements to elevate and refine the language from the degradation and corruption of the Thirty Years' War, and towards the end of the eighteenth century Duchess Anna Amalia and her son, Duke Karl August, made the name of Weimar immortal as the home of the greatest writers of Germany's classical literature. This same large-minded Duke had also no small share in the revival of the truly national idea in German politics.

WIELAND \* was the first of the great names in German literature to be permanently associated with the small city which soon came to be known as the

\* CHRISTOPH MARTIN WIELAND, born 1733 near Biberach in Würtemberg, died 1813 in Weimar. 1752-60 in Switzerland; 1760-69, official in Biberach; 1769-72, professor in the University of Erfurt. His youthful writings, influenced by Klopstock and Plato, were followed by a period of revulsion from their pietistic strain to delight in the world and the pleasures of sense. Finding the golden mean, he was at the height of his power during the first decade of his residence in Weimar, after which time he occupied himself very largely with study and translation of the classic literature of ancient Greece and Italy. His notable novels are *Agathon*, 1766; *Die Abderiten*, 1774; and *Peregrinus Proteus*, 1791. He wrote many comic tales in verse, an epic-didactic poem, *Musarion*, 1768, and other shorter and longer epics in verse. He first naturalized Shakespeare in Germany, by translating in prose a large portion of his plays. Wieland's masterpiece is his romantic epic *Oberon*, 1780, in which chivalry, the Orient, and fairy-lore are attractively blended.

Athens of Germany. He was called thither in 1772 by Duchess Amalia as tutor of her sons, and remained until his death in 1813. As a writer of epic poems, romantic and comic, of philosophic novels, and as an editor, he made German style more fluent and elegant, won over the higher classes of the nation from French to German literature, popularized English and French philosophy, and remained withal a kindly, genial friend and patron of all men of letters.

GOETHE,\* in Matthew Arnold's view "the greatest poet" and "the clearest, the largest, the most helpful thinker of modern times," came to Weimar in 1775, on the invitation of Duke Karl August, to make a visit of a few months, and—remained until his death

\* JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE, born 1749 in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, died 1832 in Weimar. After a precocious boyhood in his native city, he studied at the universities of Leipzig and Strassburg, and lived again mostly in Frankfurt until he went to Weimar. From 1786 to 1788 Goethe was in Italy. Thereafter his residence at Weimar was uninterrupted, save by travel. Early and long he shared largely in the administration of the government of the Duchy. His writings are numerous and most varied. As a writer of short lyric poems he is unequalled. His chief dramatic works are *Götz von Berlichingen*, 1773; *Iphigenie auf Tauris*, 1787; *Egmont*, 1788; *Torquato Tasso*, 1790; and *Faust*, 1808-1832. His leading epic poems are *Reineke Fuchs*, 1793, and *Hermann und Dorothea*, 1797. In the field of the novel and of narrative prose his weightier productions are *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, 1774; *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, 1795; *Wilhelm Meisters Wanderjahre*, 1821-29; *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, 1809; and the wonderful autobiography, *Aus meinem Leben, Dichtung und Wahrheit*, 1811-1833. He wrote much in criticism of literature and art, and in the domain of natural science, where also he achieved greatness.





in 1832. Weimar was soon the chief of the small principalities, which now, as in 1517 and 1675, at once initiated and directed the intellectual movement of the age. Goethe more than any other man made Weimar the literary capital of Europe.

HERDER,\* great personality and mighty prophet, was invited by the Duke, on the advice of Goethe, to come to Weimar in 1776 in an official capacity, and continued to reside there until his death in 1803. Of him Karl Hillebrand has said: "No one, Kant perhaps alone excepted, has contributed more to the stock of German thought, or has exercised greater or

\* JOHANN GOTTFRIED HERDER, born 1744 near Königsberg, died 1803 in Weimar. As a student of philosophy and theology at Königsberg he was profoundly influenced by the great Kant, by Hamann, by the works of Rousseau and of Lessing. After alternately teaching, preaching, and traveling, he became in 1776 the head of the ecclesiastical affairs of the Duchy of Weimar. His purely original poetic productions are not important. It is in his prose works and his translations that his power lay. His critical writings were: *Fragmente über die neuere deutsche Litteratur*, 1766; *Kritische Wälder* [= Collections], 1769; and, in conjunction with Goethe, *Blätter von deutscher Art und Kunst*, 1773. In the field of religion and philosophy he wrote *Die älteste Urkunde des Menschengeschlechts*, 1774; *Vom Geist der ebräischen Poesie*, 1782-83; *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit*, 1784-1791; and *Briefe zur Beförderung der Humanität*, 1793-1797. As translator his chief works were the *Stimmen der Völker in Liedern*, 1778-1779, and *Der Cid*, not published until 1805, after his death; the former is a collection of folk-songs and popular ballads from all parts of the world, the latter is a free reproduction of a collection of Spanish ballads on the legendary history of the famous Don Rodrigo Diaz de Bivar, who lived in the eleventh century.

more lasting influence over an age, a nation, or the world at large, than Herder. Directly or indirectly he revolutionized learning, history, and literature, as Kant reconstructed philosophy."

It was Wieland, Herder, Goethe, and Schiller\* who, aided by the somewhat older Klopstock† and Lessing,‡ recreated German literature and, by making a united intellectual, spiritual Germany, laid the necessary foundation of that united political Germany which was not fully realized until after 1870. How prophetic are Schiller's words in an early essay on the stage: "If we should come to have a real national

\* SCHILLER was closely connected with Weimar from 1787 and resided there after 1799. In the Appendix is given a table of the more important dates of his life, for a detailed presentation of which and of the traits of his character and outward appearance the reader is referred to any one of the biographies in the list on pp. 282, 283.

† FRIEDRICH GOTTLIEB KLOPSTOCK, born 1724 in Quedlinburg, died 1803 in Hamburg. His fame rests upon his many lyric poems and mainly upon his masterpiece *Der Messias*, 1748-1773, a religious epic in twenty cantos, singing Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, the chief beauties of which are also lyric in their nature.

‡ GOTTHOLD EPHRAIM LESSING, born 1729 in Kamenz in Upper Lusatia, died 1781 in Braunschweig, is the greatest critic of modern times and the founder of the modern German drama. His critical works were: *Briefe die neueste Litteratur betreffend*, 1759-60; *Laokoon*, 1766; *Hamburgische Dramaturgie*, 1767-68; and several small polemical writings relating to the history of art, philosophy, and theology. His epoch-making dramas were: *Miss Sara Sampson*, 1755; *Minna von Barnhelm*, 1767 (the first classic German comedy); *Emilia Galotti*, 1772 (the first classic German tragedy); and *Nathan der Weise*, 1779, a dramatic poem, which is his chief poetic production.

stage (or drama), then we should be a nation." Indeed, geographical Germany may be annihilated, but this foundation of the spiritual Germany of Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller will last forever.

In Weimar, then, *Tell*—this drama of liberty and national unity—was written and first played. Human liberty, individual and national, is its theme. It is a monument to the liberating and liberalizing power of the ideal of humanism which was the common glory of the great writers just mentioned,—above all of Herder, Goethe, and Schiller,—and the realization of which in literature and life was the inspiration of the friendship of Goethe and Schiller, unparalleled in the annals of literary history and interrupted only by death.

The years of this friendship from 1794 to 1805 are preeminently the period of Weimar's hegemony in German literature. In the union of these two men are focused all the previous thought and literature of Germany, and from it radiate all the influences that have determined the later literature. "For us of the present time the golden age of classical idealism is only seemingly past, although we call ourselves not idealists, but realists. If we analyze the ideas which underlie the ethics of to-day, we find them connected by a thousand threads with classical idealism. The true vital content of that golden age was faith in the reality and harmony of the Good and the Beautiful, the conviction that ideals grow on the earth like the flowers of spring, that heaven is above the earth but not outside of it, that man made in the image of God has the right and the power to draw the divine from his own breast." (Julian Schmidt.)

Goethe and Schiller had each in youth passed through a period of intensely revolutionary feeling; Goethe, ten years older than Schiller, in the eighth decade of the century and Schiller in the ninth. Residence and society in Weimar, unselfish labor, and study of natural science had in Goethe's case prepared the way for the completion by art during his travel and residence in Italy, 1786-88, of that strengthening and purifying which Schiller had gained by his study of history from 1787 on, and of Kant's philosophy, 1791 and later. Although Schiller in 1787, during Goethe's absence in Italy, had passed some months in Weimar, and through Goethe's influence had become professor of history in the University of Jena in 1789, it was not until 1794 that intimate relations were formed between them. It was an editorial project of the younger man that furnished the occasion—the publication for the year 1795 of a monthly, *Die Horen* ("The Hours"). A request to contribute brought from Goethe a kind answer; a personal meeting in Jena in May 1794 developed this beginning; correspondence and visits followed and favored the rapid flowering and fruition of this friendship. Of it Goethe said later: "It was for me a new springtime, in which all seeds shot up and gaily blossomed in my nature." Under its influence Schiller was yet to unfold his highest power.

The publication of *The Hours* was a publication of the fact that the authors of Weimar and the scholars of Jena now were the leaders in spiritual Germany and in the work of its unification. In his prospectus Schiller said: "The more the narrow interests of the present keep the minds of men on the stretch and

subjugate while they narrow, the more imperious is the need to free them through the higher universal interest in that which is purely *human* and removed beyond the influence of time, and thus once more to reunite the divided political world under the banner of Truth and Beauty."

The ideals of *The Hours* were, however, too lofty to be realized immediately. The stupidity and envy of mediocre writers contributed to prevent the success of the journal, memorable though it be in the history of German literature. Yet what the journal failed in was soon accomplished by the *Xenien*, by the creation of new imperishable works of literary art and by the influence of the Weimar theater.

For the years 1796-1800 Schiller edited a *Musenalmanach*, an annual of poetry. The *Xenien* appeared in September, 1796, in the *Musenalmanach* for 1797. Suggested by the *Xenia* of the Latin poet Martial, they are about four hundred distichs, satirical, drastic, crushing, partly by Goethe, partly by Schiller, and partly by both, in which these authors deal with the bad writers and shallow critics of their time as Pope and Byron did with their contemporaries in the *Dunciad* and in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*. "The justness of the attack," says Scherer, "was brilliantly proven by the pitiableness of the defence." The outcome of the tremendous sensation produced was the confirmation of the leadership assumed in *The Hours*.

The movements just mentioned were, however, but a clearing of the way, a preparation for that creation and presentation of literature of the highest order, which culminated in the performance upon the

Weimar stage in the years from 1798 to 1804 of Schiller's great dramas under Goethe's direction. Goethe managed the Ducal Theater in Weimar from 1791 until 1817, and made it as much a national theater as any in Germany, especially in the years 1798-1804, when even that in Berlin was influenced by it. An ideal style and an ideal repertory were aimed at.

The period of Goethe's successful writing of dramas seemed now to be past, but in epic poetry, in the ballad, and in the novel he was yet to publish great and beautiful works. Since the appearance in 1774 of his novel, *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, which moved profoundly all Germany and twenty years later began to make him famous in England, he had published no narrative work, long or short, in prose or in verse, with the exception of a few ballads. But his greatest work in the form of the novel, *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, which he had begun in 1777, now had its completion hastened under the stimulus of Schiller's sympathy, and came entire into the hands of the public in October 1796, simultaneously with the *Xenien*. This novel of culture, "a rich, manifold life brought close to our eyes," more than any other of his prose writings spread and confirmed his fame in Germany and has "entered into the training of Europe."

Goethe's most perfect long poem was his next work, begun immediately after he finished *Wilhelm Meister*, and completed in June 1797,—*Hermann and Dorothea*, an epic poem in hexameters. He had exercised himself in this form in his translation and reconstruction in 1793 of the Low-German *Reynard the Fox*; he



now used this verse in portraying German middle-class life with comprehensive, tender truthfulness and beauty that can never fade. In the Homeric spirit he most successfully realized the endeavor, in his own words, "in an epic crucible to free from its dross the purely human existence of a small German town and at the same time mirror in a small glass the great movements and changes of the world's stage."

But in this season of poetical ripening and reaping, due so largely to Schiller's fervent admiration, sympathy, and stimulating example, the lesser fruits and *Faust*, the greatest, were no less favored.

Before this time Schiller himself had not written many short poems that deserve to live. Superior to Goethe as a dramatic poet, he is not his peer in lyric poetry. His intellectual interest in philosophy and history does not leave room enough for that fullness of unreflecting passion and clearness of sensuous apprehension of nature and life, from which the finest lyrics freely spring. Schiller's lyrics are mostly lyrics of reflection, of thought; as such, not a few of his philosophic odes are masterpieces. It is by one of these, indeed, that next to his greatest dramas he is best known; for more than all the others it is charged with human emotion. This is *Das Lied von der Glocke*, finished in September, 1799. No other German lyric is more dear to the heart of the people than this Song of the Bell. Of it Wilhelm von Humboldt said: "In no language do I know of any poem that within so small a compass opens so wide a poetic horizon, traversing the scale of all deepest human emotion, and in altogether lyrical way displaying life with its most important events and epochs as an epos bounded by

natural limits." The year 1797 was for both poets numerically *the* "Ballad Year"; that and the following years were rich in ballads and lyrics from both, productions of great power and depth of feeling and thought, and of most perfect art.

In the year 1797 also, Goethe, yielding to Schiller's kindly urgency, took in hand again his *Faust*, of which a small "Fragment" had been published in 1790, and, humanly speaking, the world owes to Schiller the existence in its present relatively complete form of this marvellous, unique work, the greatest in all modern literature since Shakespeare, presenting as it does with unsurpassed depth, power, and beauty all that Goethe's rare nature and experience could teach as to the spiritual meaning and end of life.

To Schiller we are also in a measure indebted that Goethe wrote his other works of these and later years, his autobiography *Fiction and Truth*, his novel *Elective Affinities*, his rich and varied *Wilhelm Meister's Journeyman'ship*, his many lyrics, both detached and in the collection *West-Östlicher Divan*. Without the second poetic spring beginning in 1795 could there have been this full harvest in these later years? And what more convincing testimony than Goethe's life and work during these ten years to the strength and elevation of Schiller's mind and heart!

The question arises: Why might there not have been twenty instead of only ten years of this noble friendship through an earlier beginning? When a young student, Schiller read Goethe, even then a famous author whose works not only directed his thought, but also challenged him to emulation. He saw Goethe when in 1779 Karl August and Goethe visited the Karls-



schule; and when in 1787 Schiller's drama *Don Carlos* showed to all that his artistic power was well developed and much refined, the consciousness that he had some right to stand with the best authors of his day impelled him to go to Weimar to make the personal acquaintance of his present and future peers. He was heartily welcomed by Wieland, by Herder, by all, but—Goethe was in Italy. Schiller's frame of mind at this time we know from his letters to friends. "I am where I have so often longed to be and seem to myself to be moving in the plains of Greece." He will give his life to greatness, pre-eminence in the things of the spirit. He feels only one man to be his superior—Goethe. To this one man he feels called to draw near and give uplifting aid. But when their personal acquaintance formally begins in September 1788, all ground for this prophetic feeling seems to vanish, and he writes that his high opinion of Goethe has not been lowered, but that they will always stand far apart.

On Goethe's side, however, the reserve was more intense and conscious. Six years had to pass away before he could sufficiently overcome the aversion he felt towards the dramas of Schiller's youth and their author. Schiller stood before Goethe's mind as the representative of the excesses and errors of the Storm and Stress Period, of which he himself was now completely purged. Lofty ideals of simplicity, grandeur, repose possessed Goethe, the literary artist, on his return from the land of ideal art. He would give himself to art and science. How could he now take to his heart the author of *The Robbers*? "Schiller was odious to me," he says, "because his powerful but immature talent had poured out over my country in

a full sweeping flood those very ethical and dramatic paradoxes from which I was endeavoring to keep myself free." Schiller had, to be sure, developed more than Goethe knew, but still more time and the experiences of the next few years were needed to make him fully worthy to be received by Goethe as he longed to be received.

What were these early works that still rose as a barrier between Schiller and Goethe? Schiller's dramatic production divides naturally into two well-defined periods or groups, at once separated and connected by years of study, thought, and writing, mainly in history and philosophy. To the first group, of the period of storm and stress in personal experience and of tumultuous, unclarified production, belong the three kindred prose dramas, *Die Räuber*, *Die Verschwörung des Fiesko*, *Kabale und Liebe*, and one in iambic blank verse, *Don Karlos*, completed in 1787, marking its author's rapid development and his passing over to history. These prose plays are satirical, republican, revolutionary. Their spirit of rebellion against all established order and social conventions sprang from the general conditions of the time and especially from the trials, the despotic tyranny and oppression which Schiller had himself experienced.

*The Robbers*, although the first, is the most remarkable of the early plays. It is the tragedy of the individual in conflict with the law and order of civilization, which he regards as based on wrong, until, made wise by experience, he resigns himself to his fate in submission to law. Technical dramatic skill, foreshadowing future perfection, strength and variety of the characters, great vigor of expression, are all

manifest in it. There is much youthful exaggeration in thought and word, but also much genius and power in its whole plan and movement. "The brooding spirit of dissatisfaction and revolt had found a voice; and there was in *The Robbers* an appeal to the deeper nature of man, to the grander impulses of youth, an appeal that seldom fails."

The *Conspiracy of Fiesco* is a "Republican Tragedy," whose hero is the noble leader of an attempted political revolution in Genoa in the sixteenth century. It is interesting as being the first of Schiller's historical dramas, less extravagant in diction and more condensed in action than his first work, below which it falls far in creative force.

The third play, *Love and Intrigue*, is a tragedy of middle-class family life, torrent-like in the rush of its emotion, "a magnificent description, compressed into *one* action, of the conditions of the life of the time." It is, however, imperfect in many crudities, much unnaturalness, and no little false pathos.

*Don Carlos* marks transition in many respects. Originally conceived in 1782, it was not completed until 1787, after many interruptions and recastings. The life and death of this son of Philip II. of Spain have often been regarded as a fit theme for tragedy. Had Schiller treated it when fully matured, the drama might well have been inferior to no other he wrote, as it is on the whole much superior to his earlier works. Its weakness, due in part to the slowness of its completion, is lack of unity. In the first part of the play Prince Carlos is the hero, while in nearly all the rest of it the hero is the Marquis Posa, an embodiment of all the faith in man and the cosmopolitan ideals of the

eighteenth century. This figure, a radiant and fascinating creation, together with the splendid diction of many elevated passages and the successful use of iambic verse, are what make the play live even to-day, imperfect yet great.

It is a long reach of twelve years forward to the completion of Schiller's next drama. There intervene varied trials and acute protracted illness, historical study and writing, editorial labors, absorbing interest in philosophy, literary criticism, lyrics, ballads, and epigrams. The two main streams of interest, however, are history and philosophy, with the watershed between them lying at the end of the year 1792. To this period belongs then naturally the greater portion of Schiller's non-dramatic prose writings, whose style is in general clear, full, rhetorical, often majestic. Among these are several critical essays, notably those on Goethe's *Egmont* and on Bürger's *Poems*. His *Philosophical Letters* are interesting for the light they shed on the development of his religious views. He attempted prose fiction in one uncompleted tale, *The Visionary*, extravagant in plot, but clear and broad in style.

Schiller's historical writings have real and great value, not as representing profound original investigation, but as uniquely successful in instructing and charming the ordinary reader. To him has been ascribed the creation of an artistic historical style in German. The first large work was the *History of the Revolt of the United Netherlands from Spanish Rule*, in some respects the best of his historical works, a vigorous, brilliant account of a portion of that great conflict for liberty, with much emphasis on ethical



values, much psychological penetration, and effective analysis of character. It was again the theme of liberty—spiritual, religious liberty—that led him to write the *History of the Thirty Years' War*, in which are well traced the broad outlines of this complicated struggle. Among his numerous shorter historical essays the most striking is his inaugural lecture as professor on *What Is General History and To What End Do We Study It?* It is important in the development of the philosophy of history, and indeed it must be said that in all his historical writings philosophic connection is aimed at. He conceives history in the broad sense as the history of civilization in all its aspects.

As fruits of Schiller's philosophical study and reflection we have not a few essays on æsthetics. Here belong also the *Letters on the Æsthetic Education of Man*. Perhaps the most original and in its influence the most far-reaching of Schiller's prose writings was his essay *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*, to which Goethe referred the introduction into modern literary criticism of the distinction between classicism and romanticism.

The years just after 1790 were for both Goethe and Schiller years of slumbering poetic activity. In study of history Schiller was broadening his knowledge, in philosophic reflection he was deepening and refining it, in both he was enriching himself for dramatic creation. Their friendship led Goethe back from plastic art and natural science to poetic production. No less did it lead Schiller back from learning and speculation to pure literature. The fruits of philosophy are most evident in his reflective lyrics. But

as he had passed from the drama to history, so now his study of the Thirty Years' War restored him to the drama, and between October 1796 and March 1799 he wrote what in bulk and weight of matter is his largest work and what many regard as all in all his most important dramatic production.

This is, in title, *Wallenstein, a Dramatic Poem*, but in reality one great tragedy of eleven acts, divided into a one-act prelude, *Wallenstein's Camp*, and two five-act plays, *The Piccolomini* and *Wallenstein's Death*. The time of the play is the last four days of Wallenstein's life in February 1634, but it brings before us with the utmost impressiveness not only the tragedy of that great man's character and fate, but also the struggles, the sufferings, and the triumphs of the whole Thirty Years' War. This drama moulded the German drama for at least a generation. Tieck said thirty years later that all Germany felt that it established a new epoch.

When Schiller in December 1799 took up his residence in Weimar, he brought with him three acts of a new drama, also historical, the elaboration after the completion of *Wallenstein* of a long-cherished idea. This was his *Maria Stuart*, which was finished early in 1800 and first performed in June 1800. The familiar subject of the life and death of Mary, Queen of Scots, was modified in details, her character refined and brightened, Elizabeth's coarsened and darkened. The main theme is the moral elevation of the idealized character of the heroine. It is the most regularly constructed of all Schiller's plays,—technically a masterpiece and splendid in many passages of lofty thought and intense feeling. To Madame de Staël it



seemed to be the most pathetic and best conceived of German dramas.

From the English-French atmosphere of Maria Stúart Schiller turned at once, as if seeking to maintain a proper balance of national interests, to the French-English scenes of his *Maid of Orleans*. This drama, *Die Jungfrau von Orleans*, was written between June 1800 and April 1801. It is in some sense less strictly historical than those just preceding, and as part of its title the author named it a Romantic Tragedy. Belonging to the Middle Ages, the subject involves miracles and idyllic elements. The simplicity of the Maid's character was especially congenial to Schiller, and hardly less so the grand and massive effects of warring armies. Purity in woman, the inspiring sway of religion and patriotism, with what power and beauty are these here portrayed!

*Die Braut von Messina*, our author's next drama, was completed in February 1803, after about a year's labor in working out a conception that extended back almost fifteen years. *The Bride of Messina* is a digression into the field of experiment from the main highway of Schiller's dramatic production, a digression due to the temptation of theory and perhaps partly to that unconscious desire of equilibrium suggested just above. For here Schiller attempted to pour modern spirit and feeling into the mould of the ancient Greek drama, to exalt the sway of destiny, to compress the action within the compass of but few characters, and to employ a chorus. The theme is Schiller's free invention, the tragic destruction of a family doomed by destiny through the love of two brothers for their own sister, unrecognized until it is

too late. The attempt was as a whole unsuccessful. The combination of the ancient and the modern elements is not sufficiently intimate, organic. But in stateliness of style and melody of diction, great portions of it are unsurpassed by anything that Schiller ever wrote.

The next and, alas! the last large drama of our author was the one which is now before us, *Wilhelm Tell*, the details of the writing of which are given below, and elsewhere critical comment. But the last dramatic work which Schiller completed was the brief lyrical play, *Homage of the Arts*, an allegory celebrating beauty and the function of the arts in ennobling life. How fitting that this noble expression of the high office of art followed so immediately upon the presentation to the nation of his *Tell*.

Of the group of great dramas which we have now reviewed Richard Wagner said: "Each of Schiller's dramas from *Wallenstein* to *Tell* marks a conquest in the domain of the unknown ideal." *Wilhelm Tell* is not only in the best sense the most popular of German dramas, but also a work of art characteristic of the classical age of German literature and a monument of the cooperation of Goethe and Schiller.

Schiller's life has been called a drama more agitated, attractive, and touching than any he wrote. It is the tragedy of the spirit, the ideal in conflict with the material realities of earthly life, temporally seeming to be conquered, but eternally triumphant. The brilliant historian Scherer has sketched it with these bold strokes:

"Goethe, narrating the death of Achilles, makes Athene say of him: 'Alas, that so early this fair form





shall fade from the earth, which far and wide rejoices in commonness!' And when Schiller was dead and Goethe celebrated him in song, he gave him this highest praise: 'Behind him lay in unsubstantial seeming that which subdues and fetters us all,—the common.'

"But we say: Not Achilles! Here is more than Achilles! No son of the gods, no favorite of the gods; no Thetis was his mother, no Athene protected him. In lowliness was he born, through lowliness did he drag his way for long years. Wild and vehement was his youth, rich in passion and catastrophes. His poetic talent rushed on unbridled by rule; revolutionary fury was his muse, and strong theatrical effect his guiding star. No one warned him on his way, the public hailed him with exultation, enthusiastic friendship cast itself upon his heart.

"To seek his fortune he came to Weimar. What he attained was not much,—a meager professorship in Jena, later limited means in Weimar. Soon sickness and wasting disease began to drain his physical strength.

"Yet Providence gave him three great goods—the friendship of Goethe, the love of a noble, single-hearted wife, and, what transcends even happiness in friendship and marriage, invincible elevation of soul. However long he waited, however hard he strove, however low he bowed, before one bright ray of good fortune fell upon him there still remained ever untouched within him something that had pinions and bore him safe aloft.

"The on-storming youth became a man of stable strength. First at a distance and then nearer and

nearer he followed the steps of Goethe. But from the very beginning the difference between them was fundamental. Goethe found his ideals again in reality; Schiller measured reality by his ideals and found it too small. Above reality, the world of the senses, ordinary things, the commonplace, the prose of life,—above all this that Goethe named 'the common' (das Gemeine) Schiller ever sought to lift himself, and so did conquer it."

This loftiness in Schiller was so characteristic as to make ever memorable the words of the sculptor Dannecker, "I will make Schiller life-size—that is, colossal."

#### THE WRITING OF WILHELM TELL.

Liberty and national union are, abstractly stated, the theme of Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell*. On this theme and its beautiful treatment rests the universal and continued popularity of the drama. In it and in the origin of the play we may also find again both the union and the independence that characterized the friendship of Goethe and Schiller. The general notion of treating poetically the story of Tell was common to both poets, originating with Goethe and in some sense resigned by him in favor of Schiller, while their proposed modes of treatment were altogether independent.

When Goethe in 1797 for the third and last time traveled in Switzerland, he visited the country of the Forest Cantons, where the story of Tell impressed itself deeply upon his mind as being fit for fashioning into an epic poem. On October 14th he wrote to Schiller with keen interest, saying in part: "I feel almost sure

that the story of Tell could be treated epically, and if I should succeed in what I contemplate, we shall have a curious instance of a story first attaining its full truth through poetry, instead of history being made a fable, as generally happens." Schiller answered with hearty approval, unconsciously prophetic of his own future work: "Your idea with regard to Wilhelm Tell is a very happy one. . . . This beautiful subject will afford us a certain broad insight into human nature, in the same way as between high mountains one may often obtain a vista into the far distance." In Goethe's letters there is further mention of the plan at intervals until late in July, 1798, after which time other interests seem to have suppressed this one.

In later years Goethe wrote several brief accounts of his intended epic *Tell* and his relation to Schiller's drama; the italicized passages in the following quotation from Goethe's *Annals*, under the year 1804 (but written much later), are especially important: "We had entered into the new century. I had often talked over the affair with Schiller, had often enough entertained him with my lively description of those walls of rock and the anguished lot of the people, *so that at last this theme could not but shape and mould itself in his mind according to his own fashion.* He too made me acquainted with his views, nor did I wish to have any part whatever in a material which had now for me lost the charm of novelty and of immediate observation, but formally and with pleasure I resigned in his favor all my rights and claims to the property. . . . It will, moreover, clearly appear, when the above representation is compared with Schiller's drama, *that the latter is wholly the author's production, and that he*

*owes nothing to me except the incitement to the task and a more vivid view of the situation than the simple legend could have afforded him."*

Early in 1801, amid the universal curiosity as to what dramatic subject Schiller would take up after his now completed *Maria Stuart*, the report spread abroad that he was writing a drama, *Tell*, while in fact he was at work upon his *Jungfrau von Orleans*. How shall we explain this report? Probably by assuming that Schiller somewhat recently before this must have expressed in conversation his strong interest in the story of Tell and his opinion of its suitability for the drama. At any rate we know that from December 1800 until December 1801 he had from the Weimar Library the first two volumes of Müller's *History of Switzerland*, containing the story of Tell. This rumor caused many inquiries to be made of Schiller, by publishers, theater-managers, and others, but we have no recorded definite utterance from Schiller himself before March, 1802, in letters to Goethe, Körner, and his publisher, Cotta. To the latter, for example, he then wrote, asking for an accurate map of the region of the Forest Cantons, and added: "I have been obliged to hear so often the false rumor that I was writing a *Wilhelm Tell* that at last I have turned my attention to this subject and studied Tschudi's *Chronicon Helveticum*. This work has attracted me so much that I am now fully resolved to make a *Wilhelm Tell*, and it shall become a play by which we shall get honor." In September of the same year he wrote to Körner: "Perhaps you heard it said as early as last year that I was writing a *Wilhelm Tell*, for even before my journey to Dresden [in August 1801]



inquiries were made of me about it from Berlin and Hamburg. I had never dreamt of it. As, however, the demand for this play was continually repeated, my attention was excited, and I began to study Tschudi's *History of Switzerland*. This was a revelation to me, for the author writes with such an honest Herodotean, nay, almost Homeric spirit that his work is able to put me into a poetic mood. . . . Although the story of Tell seems anything but favorable to dramatic treatment, since the action falls widely apart in place and in time, is mainly political, and—apart from the tale of the hat and the apple—hard to represent, still I have now so reconstructed it poetically that it has passed over from history into poetry. I need not tell you that it is a desperately hard task. . . . Yet the pillars of the building are already firmly set, and I hope to rear a substantial edifice.”

In spite, however, of his interest in this subject, another one now had the first place, because of the charm of its novelty of form and because it seemed easier to finish rapidly,—*Die Braut von Messina*, written between August 1802 and February 1803. Then older subjects were once more taken up—one from the history of the Knights of Malta and one from that of the English Pretender Warbeck—and two comedies were translated from the French of Picard. These and other digressions filled up the following spring and summer and delayed the beginning of the actual writing of *Tell* until the 25th of August, 1803. During these months, Iffland, the director of the theater in Berlin, had repeatedly written to Schiller urging him to write plays of great scenic effect and appealing powerfully to the general public, and this considera-

tion seems to have had no little weight in Schiller's final decision. Interesting extracts from his letters follow. To Iffland in July: "This work [*Tell*] shall, I hope, turn out to be in accordance with your wishes, and as a play for the people interest both the feelings and the senses." To Wilhelm von Humboldt in August: "This subject [*Tell*] is very refractory and is causing me great difficulty; but since in other respects it possesses great attraction and by reason of its popular character is so suitable to the stage, I do not shrink from the labor of mastering it." To Körner, September 12th: "I beg you to mention some good books on Switzerland, if you know of any. I am obliged to read much about the country, because the local conditions and coloring have such great significance in this subject, and I should like to have as many local features and touches as possible. If the gods are favorable to the execution of what I have in mind, it shall become a mighty work and shake the stages of Germany." To Iffland in November: "In *Tell* I am now living and moving. . . . A real play for the whole people, I promise you."

These extracts reveal to us the poet's delight in his subject, his difficulties and his desires. Having never been in Switzerland, he was obliged through laborious study of many books, maps, and illustrations to construct for his mind's eye vivid pictures of the Swiss landscape and life.\* In this he was also aided by the

\* For Swiss history and the story of Tell, Schiller's chief authority was Ägidius Tschudi's (1505-1572) *Chronicon Helveticum oder eigentliche Beschreibung der sowohl im H. Römischen Reich als besonders in einer löblichen Eidgenossenschaft vorgeloffenen Begegnussen*, which was not printed until

sympathetic descriptions which both his wife and Goethe as eye-witnesses could give him. It was moreover not easy to mould the subject-matter into simplicity and unity, while further lesser difficulties were caused him by ill health, by ordinary business and social duties, by the death of Herder, and by the protracted visit in Weimar of the talented but loquacious Frenchwoman, Madame de Staël. Favoring influences withal were the performance in October of Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* and the visit in January 1804 of the Swiss historian Johannes von Müller.

But Schiller's genius and diligence were sure to triumph over all obstacles. Early in January 1804 the first act (then containing also the first scene of the present second act) was completed and sent to Goethe on the 12th. February 18th saw the whole work finished. In the middle of March it had its first presentation, at Weimar, on the 17th, 19th, and 24th, while in the course of a few months it was performed with the greatest success at many of the best theaters of the land. Of the performances in Berlin in July, Iffland wrote that *Tell* had been received with

1734-36 by Iselin. But he also used freely Johannes von Müller's *Geschichte der schweizerischen Eidgenossenschaft*, 1786, M. I. Schmidt's *Geschichte der Deutschen*, Petermann Etterlin's *Kronika von der loblichen Eydtnosschaft*, 1507, in the edition of Spreng, 1752, and J. Stumpf's *Schwytzer Chronik*, 1548. For the scenery of Switzerland and the manners and customs of the people Schiller's principal sources were Scheuchzer's *Naturgeschichte des Schweizerlandes*, 1746, and its continuation of 1752, Fäsi's *Staats- und Erdbeschreibung der ganzen helvetischen Eidgenossenschaft*, 1766, Meiner's *Briefe über die Schweiz*, 1792, and J. G. Ebel's *Schilderung der Gebirgsvölker der Schweiz*, 1798-1802.

delight and that the crowds of spectators showed no diminution. The success of the drama on the stage was but the precursor of its wider and greater success when issued in print. This did not occur until October 1804, in the form of an *almanac* or annual, adapted to serve as a Christmas or New Year's gift, as may be seen from the facsimile of the title-page, printed in this edition, immediately before the text.

The first edition numbered 7000 copies, of which a portion contained one or more colored engravings. But few months had passed before a new edition was required; this numbered 3000 copies. The later circulation we need not follow numerically; in the editions of the poet's collected works, in separate editions, both German and foreign, it has gone wherever the German language is read.\* The universal and complete success of the drama on the stage and throughout the nation and the world then and since is but the fulfillment of the hopes of its author and publisher. To Körner Schiller wrote: "*Wilhelm Tell* has produced a greater effect upon the stage than any other play of mine"; and to Cotta: "I have written it with all my heart, and that which comes from the heart will touch the heart." Cotta, returning to the author the last proofs, wrote: "Here is the end of your immortal *Tell*—in his time there lived real men"; and when the first edition was issued: "*Tell* now goes into all the world."

Created and given to the German people when destruction was threatened by Napoleonic tyranny,

\* In the popular low-priced series of the *Universalbibliothek*, published by Reclam in Leipzig, *Tell* leads by far in circulation. More than 600,000 copies of it have been sold.



Schiller's drama *Wilhelm Tell* then and ever since has most powerfully inspired the Germans in their long struggle for the realization of the ideals of liberty and union in righteousness. These ideals Schiller himself expressed, contrasting them with the dangers of wild revolution, in the lines with which he dedicated a presentation-copy in manuscript to his friend and patron Karl Theodor von Dalberg, Archbishop of Mainz, Prince Elector :

Wenn rohe Kräfte feindlich sich entzweien  
 Und blinde Wut die Kriegesflamme schürt,  
 Wenn sich im Kampfe tobender Parteien  
 Die Stimme der Gerechtigkeit verliert,  
 Wenn alle Laster schamlos sich befreien,  
 Wenn freche Willkür an das Heil'ge rührt,  
 Den Anker löst, an dem die Staaten hängen :  
 Da ist kein Stoff zu freudigen Gesängen.

Doch wenn ein Volk das fromm die Herden weidet,  
 Sich selbst genug, nicht fremden Guts begehrt,  
 Den Zwang abwirft, den es unwürdig leidet,  
 Doch selbst im Jorn die Menschlichkeit noch ehrt,  
 Im Glück selbst, im Siege sich bescheidet :  
 Das ist unsterblich und des Liebes wert,  
 Und solch ein Bild darf ich Dir freudig zeigen ;  
 Du kennst's ; denn alles Große ist Dein eigen.

### LEGEND, HISTORY, MYTH.

According to Schiller's own statement to Körner, quoted above, it was the study of Tschudi's *Chronicon Helveticum* that revealed to him the full poetic beauty of the story of Tell. To this author he applies the epithets "Herodotean," "Homeric," and that with far greater right doubtless than he himself intended, since

Tschudi's unquestioning acceptance of legend and myth and his free use of constructive fancy are far greater than Schiller could have known them to be. Of himself Schiller moreover says that he so treated the subject-matter as to transfer it from history to poetry. From the hands of an Herodotus and of a dramatic poet of creative genius we hardly expect comprehensive, evenly balanced, accurate historical truth, and really knowledge of such historical truth is not at all necessary to the full understanding and appreciation of the drama *Wilhelm Tell* in its poetic beauty and power. But the great importance to the world of the achievement and maintenance of Swiss liberty prompts us to brief inquiry into its historical origin and basis.

#### LEGEND.

The popular tradition about the origin of the Swiss Confederation and the exploits of Tell is in its main outlines as follows: The land of the Forest Cantons was first settled in the time of the Romans by people who came from the far north, some from Frisia, but most from Sweden. These in time of dire famine had been chosen by lot to go forth from their beloved homes and find a new dwelling-place. They struggled on ever southward until they reached amid the Alps a lake where a storm compelled them to delay a while. On viewing the region, they were pleased with its resemblance in many features to their forsaken northern home—mountain and forest, lake and stream—and determined there to cease from wandering. The previously uninhabited shores of the lake thus became the home of freemen, the forefathers of the

people of the Forest Cantons, who never acknowledged allegiance to any lord except the Emperor.\* To him they ever rendered service gladly, as early as in the year 410, when they helped Emperor Alarich and the Pope to wrest Rome from heathen control, and as late as 1240 to Emperor Friedrich. But they were always honored by the Emperors and received from them many privileges and chartered liberties. In their internal affairs they governed themselves with absolute independence, except that certain matters of criminal law were left to a representative of the Emperor, who came into the land at their summons to exercise this penal jurisdiction. So free were these lands that they at times renounced all allegiance even to the Empire, thus early in the thirteenth century. Independent of each other, they were still united by treaties that were renewed at intervals. From the year 1240 on, when they of their own free will rejoined the Empire, they lived in full peace and security, until the Habsburg Duke Albrecht of Austria, on becoming German Emperor, began to attempt to make the three Cantons vassals of the Habsburg family. This he did in spite of remonstrances made by envoys from the Cantons, by sending representatives—governors, prefects, bailiffs

\* The German sovereign, the head of the reestablished mediæval Roman-German Empire (*das Heilige Römische Reich Deutscher Nation*), in which the King of the Germans was also *ipso facto* King of Italy and Roman Emperor. In earlier times the coronation as German King took place in Aachen, as King of Italy in an Italian city, and as Emperor in Rome; in later times there was but one coronation, in Frankfurt-am-Main. In this drama the titles *König* and *Kaiser* are both used without consistent observance of any distinction.

—who were nominally officers of the Empire, but in fact, serving only the interests of the Habsburg family, endeavored to pervert the relation of the Cantons to the Empire into a relation of vassalage to the Duke of Habsburg.

¶ In the year 1304 Emperor Albrecht sent two such governors, one, Gessler, over Uri and Schwyz, and the other, Landenberg, over Unterwalden. The residences or strongholds of Gessler were Küssnacht in Schwyz and Altorf in Uri. Landenberg had his seat in the stronghold of Sarnen, and he placed a deputy named Wolfenschiessen in that of Rossberg. These three governors or bailiffs were all hard and cruel. Of their tyrannical outrages three typical extreme cases are recited.

In the autumn of the year 1306 Wolfenschiessen grievously insulted the wife of Baumgarten in the latter's absence, who on his return promptly killed with his axe the wicked bailiff.

¶ In Unterwalden dwelt an intelligent and honorable freeman by the name of Heinrich von Melchthal, who had incurred the particular animosity of Landenberg. In the year 1307 his son Arnold von Melchthal committed an unimportant offence, for which Landenberg imposed upon the father as fine the loss of a yoke of oxen. ¶ Arnold, having resisted the servant who was sent for the oxen, having struck him and broken his finger, fled into Uri, where he was hidden by a relative. The governor sought him and ordered his father to deliver him up. And when the latter, through ignorance of his son's movements, was unable to do this, Landenberg caused both eyes of the aged Heinrich to be put out and confiscated much of his property.



The yeomanry were angered and Arnold planned vengeance.

While such things were happening in Unterwalden, Gessler was treating with similar harshness the people of Uri and Schwyz. In Altorf he compelled the people to aid with their own labor in the building of a stronghold, with which he designed to keep the people down, and there also he set up a pole with a hat on it, before which every passer-by was to bare his head and bow, while soldiers were stationed near to enforce obedience. This hat was the symbol of Austrian, not imperial, authority. In Schwyz, Gessler's arrogance was especially great towards the leading men of means and influence.

One of these, Werner Stauffacher, was urged by his wise wife Gertrud, to form a league of his like-minded countrymen against the Austrian governors. He went to his friend Walther Fürst in Uri, where he found intense and wide-spread discontent. Here he agreed with Fürst and Arnold von Melchthal to rouse the people of the three Cantons to active resistance and the expulsion of the tyrants. These three representative leaders, each bringing ten worthy men of his own Canton, met on November 10, 1307, by night at a small meadow-clearing, the Rütli, and by solemn oath the thirty-three bound themselves to bring about a united general rising of the three lands against the governors on New Year's Day 1308, if possible without bloodshed, and in the mean time to offer no open resistance.

But on the 18th of December it chanced that a good, honest yeoman of Uri, by name Wilhelm Tell, who was a member of the Rütli-league, passed several times by the hat on the pole in Altorf without obey-

ing the governor's order to bare his head and bow. He was therefore brought before Gessler for punishment. Now Tell was a fine marksman with the cross-bow, and had handsome children whom he loved. These the governor sent for, and picking out a boy of six years, commanded Tell to hit with his arrow an apple placed on the boy's head, threatening him with loss of his life in case of refusal. On Tell's declaring that he would rather die than shoot, Gessler told him that he must shoot or both the boy and himself die. Under this cruel compulsion Tell, praying to God for protection, shot and succeeded. The governor was amazed at Tell's boldness and skill, but wondered also why Tell had placed a second arrow in readiness. To Gessler's inquiry about this Tell gave only evasive answer, until the governor assured him of his life in any event. On his then declaring that if he had hit his child with the first arrow, he would with the second have taken the governor's life, Gessler had him seized, bound, and placed in the boat with himself to be taken across the lake for life-long imprisonment in the dungeon of Küssnacht. Tell's weapons Gessler also caused to be brought into the boat, that he might keep them for himself. When now they were out on the lake a fearful storm arose and was near destroying the boat and all it carried. But one of the men told Gessler that Tell was a skillful oarsman and sailor and familiar with the lake. To Gessler's inquiry whether Tell believed he could help them out of this danger, Tell answered that with God's help he could, whereupon Gessler ordered him to be unbound and to save them. But Tell, watching his opportunity, soon seized his weapons and leaped ashore upon a pro-

jecting ledge of rock, thrusting the boat behind him out upon the tossing waves. Gessler and his men barely escaped with their lives, and landing set out on their way towards Küssnacht. Meanwhile Tell had hastened to place himself in ambush by a narrow defile of the way near Küssnacht, and here he shot Gessler through with an arrow so that the tyrant fell from his horse and died.

On New Year's Eve 1308 the plans of the Rütli-league were carried out. The strongholds Rossberg, Sarnen, and others, including the unfinished one at Altorf, were seized and destroyed, the governor Landenberg driven out, and the three lands completely freed from Habsburg-Austrian tyrants—all without bloodshed. On the following Sunday the three Waldstätte sent messengers each to the other two and swore a league for ten years, in all points identical with the original agreement between Stauffacher, Fürst, and Arnold von Melchthal.

Early in the year 1308, on May 1st, the Emperor, the Habsburg Duke Albrecht of Austria, was murdered by his nephew and certain accomplices, and the choice of a Luxemburger, Heinrich VII., as the next Emperor in place of a Habsburger, confirmed in security the reasserted liberties of the Forest Cantons.

Such in its main outlines is the popular tradition concerning the deliverance of the Forest Cantons from Austrian tyranny and the origin of the Swiss Confederation. But this popular tradition as Schiller received it, with the sanction of Tschudi and Johannes von Müller, is a blending of legend, myth, historical fact, and poetic fiction, of which all the striking features and details are unhistoric—the origin and

character of the population of the Forest Cantons, their relation to the Empire, the disposition of Emperor Albrecht, the existence and mutual relations of Gessler and Tell, the sudden expulsion of tyrannous governors. The establishment of Swiss liberty and the formation of the Swiss Confederation was a slow and quasi-organic process, the essential facts of which, viewed in the light of history, are as follows.

### HISTORY.

Of Switzerland or Helvetia in general the earliest inhabitants were the prehistorical hunters, cave-dwellers, and lake-dwellers, of whom numerous traces have been found. The later Celtic races were subjugated by the Romans, and during the early centuries of our era this joint population, dependent upon the Roman Empire, made some advance in civilization. From none of these peoples, however, did the population of the greater portion of historic Switzerland descend, but rather from Germanic ancestors, the Alemannic and Burgundian races. By the great waves of the migration of nations with which from the fourth to the seventh century A.D. the flood of the northern Germanic population swept against and inundated the Roman Empire, these races were carried toward the south. The heathen Alemanni were left about the year 406 in northeastern and the Christian Burgundians about the year 450 in southwestern Switzerland. The undisturbed persistence in southeastern Switzerland of the Roman-Celtic population, and the adoption on the part of the Burgundians of the Roman language and civilization, constitute the explanation of the Neo-Latin or Romance character of these parts of



the country. But the cradle of Swiss liberty is to be found within the limits of Germanic Switzerland.

The Alemanni maintained their customs, their language, their political institutions, and for a time their heathen belief. Their entire social life favored the liberty of the individual and of the community rather than the power of a central ruler, duke or king, and we may almost affirm that this spirit has ever been the soul of Swiss political life. But the Alemanni did not constitute a large and compactly united nation, and therefore they could not maintain their external independence against the powerful Franks, and toward the middle of the sixth century they became, together with the Burgundian lands, a part of the Frankish or Merovingian kingdom. During the following period of Merovingian rule, the internal social life of the Alemanni remained essentially intact, except that they became Christianized. The Carolingian kings, however, imposed their royal authority more directly upon the Swiss lands by subjecting them to the same administration as all the other provinces of the Frankish realm, so that here no more liberty prevailed than elsewhere. By reason of the partition made in the year 843 the Alemannic territory became ultimately part of the German Empire, as did Burgundian Switzerland in the year 1032.

Moreover the three valleys of the later Forest Cantons did not begin to be settled until after the year 700, and not until about 850 does any authentic document show the existence in this region of a permanent population. That these districts were among the last in Switzerland to receive settlers and be permanently inhabited was due to their in-

fertility and inaccessibility. But when the time for settlement came, it took place under the influence of the same causes and in the same way as elsewhere. History knows nothing of the sudden intrusion hither of some thousands of people, differing in origin, character, and language from the population immediately adjacent. It rather knows that this adjacent population supplied the earlier and the later settlers, who gradually spread from better, lower, more accessible sites to those that were less good, higher, more inaccessible.

The settlement of the Forest Cantons was hastened by three main influences: (1) that of the Emperor through high vassals and officials; (2) that of monasteries and nobles; and (3) the enterprise of freemen, singly or in groups. Since in URI the first of these causes was most powerful, its population at first consisted mostly of holders of land belonging to the crown, who were nominally vassals, but still approached the condition of freemen. SCHWYZ was settled mostly by freemen, who were nevertheless subjects of the Empire, and by the side of whom there appeared also many vassals of monasteries or of nobles. UNTERWALDEN received its population chiefly through the mediation of monasteries and of nobles, wherefore there the freemen were fewer and the lesser nobility more numerous and influential.

Thus when the three Cantons first entered into history, they were by no means in possession of ancient and complete independence, but their political and social condition was precisely similar to that of the lands about them, and not until the middle of the thirteenth century do we find any trace of any sort of

alliance between them. Between their emergence into history and the end of the thirteenth century each of the three districts developed independently of the others into a more or less organized community, having a somewhat well-defined right to consider itself free from all allegiance except to the Empire. This development ran along continuously in opposition to the increase of territorial possessions and power which successive leading noble families endeavored with varying fortune to secure for themselves and their descendants. As part of the German Empire, that portion of Switzerland with which we are now concerned belonged to the Duchy of Alemannia or Swabia, and was ruled by the Dukes of Zähringen until this family died out in the year 1218. Had this family lived and ruled a century or two longer, it is probable that Switzerland would have become not a federal republic, but a principality and later a kingdom. In the struggle for the lands and power left by the Zähringers the ducal dynasties of Savoy in the west, of Kiburg and Habsburg in the east, took part until, by inheritance, by marriage, by force, and by cunning, the house of Habsburg absorbed the territory and power of Kiburg and other lesser families, and, checking the rise of Savoy, made itself, in the person of Duke Rudolf, who was elected German Emperor in the year 1273, the controlling influence in land and power, notably in the regions all about and to a great extent within the Forest Cantons.

If we now briefly review the historic growth of the liberties of the Forest Cantons, we shall be prepared to understand the final conflict between the Swiss and the Habsburg power.

URI was chronologically the first to appear on the stage and to begin Swiss history in the narrower sense. In the year 853 Ludwig the German donated to the newly founded Abbey of Our Lady in Zürich all the crown-lands with their inhabitants in the district of Thurgau. This included the valley of Uri (*pagellus Uroniæ*). In his deed of gift Ludwig ordained that all the occupants of these lands should stand under the jurisdiction of the bailiffs or governors (Vögte) representing the Abbey and the realm which later became the German Empire. The larger portion of the population of Uri came thus to be vassals of the Abbey and at the same time to stand in a certain immediate relation to the crown. But to be vassal of an ecclesiastical foundation was to be nearly free. Moreover the entire population of Uri, however manifold its class-distinctions were, formed one large community in so far as it still, in the ancient Germanic manner, held and used all unfiefed land in common. To administer this land, regular although infrequent assemblies of the community occurred, in which gradually the consciousness of political as well as economic unity could hardly fail to develop. Here then are the two roots of the liberty and the unity of Uri.

Shortly after the year 1200 Uri began to act in matters of purely local interest somewhat as a self-governing community. Its budding liberty was threatened by the last Duke of Zähringen, who was the governor (Vogt) in the name of the Abbey and the Empire, but this danger was removed by the Duke's death in 1218. Immediately thereafter Emperor Friedrich seems to have taken the Abbey-lands in Uri for a time into direct dependence upon himself as Emperor, which

relation would of itself sooner or later have led to complete political liberation. But before long we find Uri under the elder Duke Rudolf of Habsburg, to whom it was probably given by the Emperor as a fief in return for the Duke's promise of support. By this change Uri was in danger of losing its privileges of immunity from all jurisdiction except that of the Emperor, and of becoming a land subject to the Habsburgs as their hereditary possession.

Here we have the all-important distinction, so often referred to in the drama, between the immediate (*unmittelbar*) and the mediate (*mittelbar*) relation to the Empire. The *Reichsunmittelbarkeit* or dependence on the Emperor alone as liege lord was a loose bond of attachment and would not naturally lead to the hereditary lordship of any one family. On the other hand, the mediate relation to the Empire through direct dependence upon some lord who himself was, nominally at least, a vassal of the Emperor, involved very strict subjection to this lord, hereditary vassalage to his family and the prospect of no political liberties. This then was the question which received its final answer only after a long period of development and conflict: Will the Habsburgs, Dukes of Austria, be able by force or by guile to transform the loose and non-hereditary dependence of the Swiss territories upon themselves as Emperors (first Rudolf, 1273-1291, and then Albrecht, 1298-1308) into the relation of hereditary vassalage to themselves as Dukes of Austria?

Immediate danger of this subjection was removed from Uri by Heinrich, the son of Friedrich, who in the year 1231 redeemed the men of Uri from vassalage

to the elder Rudolf of Habsburg, and by a formal charter engaged that they should forever remain in direct dependence upon the Empire, and never be separated therefrom, either by fief or by mortgage. This charter of Uri of the year 1231 is the real cornerstone of the constitutional liberty of Switzerland. A few years later we find in Uri an Ammann or chief-magistrate, chosen from its inhabitants, and in 1243 Uri employed an official seal. Shortly after his election as Emperor, Rudolf of Habsburg, in the year 1274, formally confirmed the rights and liberties of the charter of 1231, and these seem to have been enjoyed without any open and violent encroachments upon them during Rudolf's long reign until his death in 1291.

SCHWYZ could not long remain unaffected by the developments in Uri. Its inhabitants were mostly freemen, of strong and self-reliant character, who were not likely to view with indifference the large possessions of the Habsburgs in their valley, and the ill-defined, easily expansible rights of lordship which the latter assumed. In the year 1240 a favorable occasion seemed to the men of Schwyz to present itself. From Emperor Friedrich II., then at Faenza in Italy, they obtained a charter granting them the same privileges of dependence solely upon the Empire which the charter of 1231 had secured to Uri. This charter was never fully acknowledged by the Habsburgs, but in the year 1273 Rudolf of Habsburg, as Emperor, himself granted by charter certain privileges to Schwyz, which was almost equivalent to recognizing it as a community dependent only upon the Empire. Yet for Schwyz also the danger of passing into complete

hereditary vassalage to the Habsburg family was ever present until the death of Rudolf in the year 1291.

In UNTERWALDEN, owing to the relatively small number of freemen, to the partition of the land among a large number of petty nobles and ecclesiastical holdings, to the great variety of jurisdictions and to distinct rights of the Habsburgs to lordship there, the development of a community with privileges and rights was much delayed. Nevertheless the men of Unterwalden did take some part against the Habsburgs in the imperial-papal conflict of the middle of the thirteenth century. With Schwyz and Luzern they made a defensive league in 1246, which is the earliest known, and probably is the "ancient confederation" of which the treaty of 1291 makes mention. Indeed, it may be that the struggles during the last years of Emperor Friedrich's reign gave rise to the traditions of the Rütli-oath, the expulsion of the governors, and the destruction of castles, and furnished the immediate basis of the development of the Swiss Confederation. Unterwalden, however, at the death of Emperor Rudolf in 1291 had still no charter, and only with far greater fear than the men of Uri or Schwyz could its people view their relation to the Habsburgs, whose power seemed destined ever to increase.

All the previous political development of the Forest Cantons, their hopes and their fears, are centered in the league of 1291, the document declaring which is the written Magna Charta of Switzerland. Heretofore the Waldstätte had for the most part acted individually, henceforth they were federated for common action. The liberties which they all possessed, although in different degrees, they now combined to

defend and to secure equally for all. This feeling and purpose, intensified by the general fear, caused by the death of Emperor Rudolf, of a return of the dangers and struggles of the middle of the century, brought the two parts of Unterwalden into full sympathy with Schwyz and Uri. Only seventeen days after the Emperor's death, on August 1st, 1291, the representatives of the three Cantons concluded and signed their ever-memorable compact.\*

But this document shows no such openly rebellious, revolutionary spirit as the traditional story would lead us to expect. In principle it was indeed directed against the power and authority of the Habsburg family, and in spirit it was somewhat independent, but in form and tone it was very conservative and moderate. It declared the aim of the league to be the preservation of the existing conditions, and expressly enjoined obedience on the part of every one to his lawful lord. Neither the property-rights of the Habsburgs nor their rights of lordship were openly disputed. An alliance for defense and offense was formed, and the administration of justice was regulated in important respects; in particular it was

\* The first lines (incomplete because of the width of the manuscript) of this remarkable document are here reproduced in facsimile. In the Appendix, pp. 287-289, may be found the Latin in full of these lines and an English translation of the whole. The venerable original—the cornerstone of the constitutional Confederation—is preserved in the archives of Schwyz. The older writers—even Tschudi—were unaware of its existence. It was published in 1760, but not appreciated by Müller or anyone before the labors of J. E. Kopp, 1835. The six-hundredth anniversary of its signing was solemnly celebrated in 1891.





agreed that the Cantons would accept no judge (i.e., Ammann) who was not one of their own people, and that they would themselves assume jurisdiction of criminal offenses. In these matters, indeed, limits were thus set to the sovereign rights of any lord. Herein and in the perpetual duration which was pledged to the obligations of the treaty was latent the character of a revolutionary declaration of independence, which was made effective, however, only by the conflicts and victories of subsequent years.

The immediate successor of Rudolf as German Emperor was not his son Albrecht nor any other Habsburg, but Adolf of Nassau, 1292-1298, with whom, however, Albrecht disputed the imperial throne. The Swiss sided naturally with Adolf, from whom in 1297 Schwyz and Uri obtained the confirmation of their liberties as granted by the charter given to Schwyz in 1240 by Friedrich II. But Adolf was unable to maintain his position, was deposed by the Electors, and killed in battle against Albrecht, who succeeded him as Emperor in 1298.

The accession of the Habsburg Albrecht, Duke of Austria, to the imperial throne made the situation of the Forest Cantons to be the same again as under Emperor Rudolf. Their natural defense against encroachments from Habsburg-Austria—the imperial authority—was now in the hands of the chief of the Habsburg family, to say nothing of the large private rights of this family in Switzerland. As Rudolf steadily but without gross violence had furthered the interests of his dynasty, so it was to be expected that Albrecht would endeavor energetically to widen and strengthen the hold of Habsburg upon Switzerland, to

restrict and finally to annul the moderate liberties already won. The authentic history of his reign, 1298-1308, does not, however, show this to have taken place in any harsh and cruel way. He was, in the interest both of the Empire and of his family, a strict but not an unjust or violent ruler. He loved law and order and confirmed the liberties of various cities in Switzerland, but the charters of Adolf to Schwyz and Uri he did not renew. During his reign, however, nothing in any way extraordinary occurred between him and the Forest Cantons ; no trace of hateful rigor can be found in any of the places under his jurisdiction ; no change took place in the administration of the affairs of the Cantons, except indeed that Unterwalden arrived at the same measure of liberty and independence as Uri and Schwyz. In none of these Cantons did a foreign governor appear ; the chief-magistrate in each was an Ammann chosen from its inhabitants. Of direct or indirect tyrannous repression on the part of Albrecht and of rebellion on the part of the inhabitants of the Cantons the authentic history of the time knows nothing. Albrecht's bearing even to the end of his reign, and that of his sons immediately after his death, showed the fullest confidence in the friendliness of the Cantons, while the people of Uri no long time after his death declared themselves to be "good friends of their highnesses, the Dukes of Austria."

Nevertheless the reign of Albrecht, against whose great power they were unable to do anything, was for the Cantons a period of repression of their aspirations for greater freedom. From this painful situation they were released by the assassination of Emperor Albrecht, which was wrought not by any inhabitant of



the Cantons, but by his own nephew\* and other noblemen of his court. The Forest Cantons thus slipped once more from the house of Habsburg, as on the death of Rudolf. For Albrecht's successor, Heinrich VII. of Luxemburg, was jealous of the great power of the Habsburgs, and in the summer of 1309 at Constanz he confirmed the charters given by Friedrich II. and Adolf to Uri and Schwyz, and formally extended their privileges to Unterwalden. At the same time he united the three lands under one governor, and granted them immunity from the jurisdiction of all courts outside their borders, with the exception of the imperial court, thus pledging to them one of the most important constitutional rights of the time. The hopes of the alliance of the year 1291—union and the greatest possible independence—thus received the sanction of the Emperor. The Dukes of Austria could not consistently recognize this action, and persistently urged their rights. Heinrich VII. died in 1313. In 1314 Ludwig of Bavaria was chosen Emperor by the majority and Friedrich of Austria by the minority of the Electors. The Forest Cantons at once recognized the supremacy of Ludwig, as their natural ally against Austria, and he displayed great friendliness towards them. In an edict issued by him in 1315 we find the three Cantons designated for the first time as a community and recognized as a distinct

\* Johannes Parricida or Johannes von Schwaben, born in 1290, was son of Duke Rudolf II. of Swabia and grandson of Emperor Rudolf of Habsburg. Both his parents died early and he grew up at the court of his mother's father, Ottokar of Bohemia. The account given of him in this drama is essentially historical.

political union. But the power of Ludwig not being yet secure, Friedrich issued a decree assigning to his own family the possession of the Waldstätte. This decree Friedrich's brother, Leopold II., engaged to execute by force of arms. In October 1315 he assembled at Baden in Aargau a brilliant host of nobles and of burghers, and in November marched proudly forth, directing his attack chiefly against Schwyz. But on the 15th of November in the narrow defile of Morgarten the sturdy Swiss freemen, heroically defending their liberties, surprised and utterly destroyed the main body of the Austrian forces, while the rest, learning of this disaster, fled the land. Soon afterwards the Forest Cantons under date of December 9th, 1315, at Brunnen, renewed the compact of 1291, changing its character and scope as the changed conditions demanded and warranted. This victory and this treaty consummated the foundation of the Swiss Confederation.\*

\*The Confederation was confirmed by the famous victories of later generations, e.g., those alluded to in lines 2438 ff. and mentioned in the Notes thereto, and enlarged by the accession of the following Cantons in the years indicated: Lucerne, 1332; Zürich, 1351; Glarus, 1352; Zug, 1352; Bern, 1353. The preceding five with the original three Forest Cantons constituted *Die Acht Alten Orte* (Cantons). With these eight the following five made *Die Dreizehn Alten Orte* (Cantons), of which with eleven associated Cantons the Confederation consisted until the year 1798: Freiburg, 1481; Solothurn, 1481; Basel, 1501; Schaffhausen, 1501; Appenzell, 1501. The disturbances of the revolutionary and Napoleonic period found their conclusion in the adoption in 1814 of the present constitution, under which the Confederation consists of twenty-two Cantons.

## GROWTH OF THE LEGEND.

We have now before us the main outlines, on the one hand, of the popular tradition, and, on the other, of the real facts as drawn from contemporary sources. It remains to indicate in general the stages of the former's growth.

As to all the picturesque dramatic features in which the legend here deviates from fact, all the contemporary annalists and chroniclers who touch upon Swiss affairs are absolutely silent. Oral tradition and the common imagination of the people require long periods of time in which to do their work of rearranging, reconstructing, embellishing, and so it is not until about a century after the battle of Morgarten, when its story had been retold by five or six generations, that we find the first addition of legendary matter and coloring in a written history.

Conrad Justinger of Bern wrote about the year 1420 a chronicle of Bern in which he gave also an account of the political origin of the Forest Cantons and of the causes of their liberation. In his conscientious but confused treatment of the main historical facts, as given above, he makes mention, evidently based on oral statements of the common people, of tyrannous and outrageous acts of foreign governors,—but all this in the most general terms. He also makes the liberties of these Cantons and their alliance to be of very ancient date.

It is also in the first half of the fifteenth century that first appears the attempt to construct a special genealogy and by their alleged remote and ancient origin to distinguish the inhabitants of the Forest

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Cantons from their neighbors and to reinforce their claim to independence from time immemorial. Even if we suppose that a faint recollection remained of the migration of the Alemanni from the north nearly a thousand years before, still the specific form of the later legend is in every case plainly the arbitrary creation of learned men, whose ignorance and caprice were prompted by national vanity. In a chronicle which he is said to have written about 1414, Johann Püntiner of Uri made the inhabitants of the Forest Cantons to be descendants of the Goths. An official document of Schwyz dated 1443 formally indorses certain details of his statement. But what may be called the classical version of the legend of a Scandinavian origin, as accepted by Tschudi, Müller, and Schiller, is due to the imagination of Johannes Fründ of Schwyz, who felt himself called to defend his fellow-countrymen from the imputation of being common peasants. His account is richly adorned with picturesque details of incidents, names, and places. But the glory which the fancies of Fründ created for Schwyz necessarily evoked the destructive envy and the constructive imitation of others. Thus, for example, Felix Hemmerlin of Zürich, about 1450, declared the inhabitants of Schwyz to be the descendants of Saxon prisoners of war, transported thither by Karl the Great. Still others derived the population of the Cantons from Cimbrians, Tauricians, Ostro-Goths, Vikings, yes, that of Unterwalden even from Romans driven from home by civil war.

Hemmerlin appears also among the creators of the legendary account of the foundation of the Confederation itself. His historical ignorance is greater than



Justinger's, but he adds in incidents, in names of persons and localities, details which are borrowed from him literally in 1487 by Felix Faber of Zürich. Although the legend thus had begun to be more definite and concrete, none of these writers made mention of tyranny on the part of Albrecht, of outrages of his governors, of conspirators at the Rütli, of Tell. To Uri indeed Hemmerlin gave no place in his account of the Confederation.

Directly contradicting Hemmerlin, the *Tellenlied*, an historical ballad, written in Lucerne about 1470, ascribes to Uri and to Wilhelm Tell alone the creation of the Confederation. This "manifesto of Uri's claims," so distinctly fictitious and fanciful, is a striking example of the part played by individual caprice and partisan pride in the elaboration of the legend which we are considering. The specifically Urner version early received full development at the hands of Melchior Russ of Lucerne. His chronicle, written from 1482 to 1488, contains a literal repetition of Justinger's narrative, into the middle of which is inserted the story of Tell as given in the Lied, but with much expansion of detail. This Urner version is in plain conflict with that later generally accepted, which developed about the same time.

The first connected presentation of all the important features of this legendary cycle in a form similar to that universally accepted later was made in the so-called *White Book* of Sarnen, or of Obwalden. This is a chronicle written about 1470, probably by Hans Schriber of Obwalden, who may have copied an older manuscript now lost. This author had but slight knowledge of real facts, but great ability to distort,

confuse, and invent. He was a literary artist in so far as that in reciting the examples of outrages on the part of the governors, he distributed them equally among the three Cantons and the three divisions of the Tenth Commandment—house, wife, ox. The story of Tell is introduced and amplified, but in subordination to the joint action of the Cantons under the leadership of Schwyz. Still the legend as given in the *White Book* lacks foundation and cohesion. No dates are given on which it may rest firmly. Few names occur, and those which are mentioned are very indefinite. There is much looseness, vagueness, and confusion.

The two conflicting—not to say contradictory—forms of the legend, the specific Uri-Tell form and the more general form of the *White Book*, existed long side by side, until both were finally modified and blended. The Uri-Tell form (adopted with arbitrary modifications by Diebold Schilling of Lucerne in 1512 and by Loriti of Glarus in 1515) was embellished with further details in a play written in Uri about the year 1512 and published in 1540, *Ein hüpsch spyl gehalten zu Ury in der Eydgenossenschaft von dem Wilhelm Thellen ihrem landtmann und ersten eydtgenossen*. About this time appeared the last learned author to write an account of the origin of the Confederation without connecting therewith the story of Tell, the outrages in Unterwalden, the person of Stauffacher, and the meeting at the Rütli. This was Mutz or Mutius of Basel in his chronicle published in 1539. He silently rejected much of the growing legends. On the other hand, Johann Stumpf of Zürich, in his chronicle published in 1548, following



mainly the Uri version, freely accepted and modified the legends without agreeing with any of his predecessors nor indeed with himself entirely. He assigned Tell's deed to the year 1314.

But the contradictions, the variations, and the vagueness of the legends in their previous growth were to disappear under the hands of later writers, who gradually elaborated the canonical form of the entire legendary cycle out of the material furnished by the *White Book*. The first in this work was Petermann Etterlin of Lucerne, whose chronicle, published in 1507, first made the story of the manuscript *White Book* more widely known. In the main Etterlin copied his authority very closely, introducing, however, greater precision and probability in some details and in others making arbitrary, groundless changes. He names Gessler always Grissler. Instead of Tall he has Wilhelm Tell. For Rütli he has Betlin. He changed Melchi into Melchthal, thus confusing two entirely distinct and unlike localities.

Ägidius [Gilg] Tschudi of Glarus (1505-1572) substantially completed the condensing, clarifying, and unifying of the hitherto vague and discordant legends into the form whose main outlines are given above. He was a high official and a learned man, who devoted many years to writing his historical works, of which the most important was his *Chronicon Helveticum*. This was not printed until 1734-36, but was used in manuscript and closely followed by nearly all writers after him. "The circumstances, the dates, the persons are the three elements of the national legend which received from Tschudi a degree of precision which they had not previously at-

tained. . . . By thus giving a natural impress and a self-evident reason to every detail, by endeavoring with captivating accuracy to arrange the events in definite sequence, by employing in his characterization of the situation, the rôle, the language of the persons a skillfully combined mixture of real and invented elements, he gave to the legend that degree of probability which brings the mind of the reader into unsuspecting repose and makes him accept all that is told him. Tschudi presents all his material with such richness of expression, such simplicity and candor that we are deceived thereby. The more he invents, the more readily do we believe him." (Rilliet.)

Tschudi's version was adopted by Heinrich Bullinger in his unprinted chronicle, and gained wide diffusion by the work of Josias Simler of Zürich, printed in 1576, *Vom Regiment der löblichen Eidgenossenschaft*. During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries some unimportant details were added from various sources. With these additions and some independent modifications Tschudi's account received its modern popular form in the classical history of Johannes von Müller (1752-1809), *Die Geschichte Schweizerischer Eidgenossenschaft*, 1786.

#### MYTH.

The most beautiful part of this Swiss national tradition, whose growth has just been sketched, is that which was earliest discredited and which, as the most thorough investigations of the best scholars in recent time have shown, has the least foundation of historic fact—the person and the exploits of Tell. The Swiss historian Franz Guillimann of Freiburg in the year

1607 based his conviction that the story of Tell was a pure fable upon the now incontestable fact that as to the person of Tell not the slightest documentary proof existed. Other writers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were similarly sceptical, although their attacks upon the general national credulity were repulsed for the time by a host of forged documentary "proofs," and finally by the overwhelming authority of Johannes von Müller. But the new historical spirit and methods of our century, through the conscientious labors of Kopp, Vischer, Wyss, Meyer von Knonau, Oechsli, Vaucher, Bernouilli, Rilliet, and others, have brought about an impartial, passionless, definitive separation of historic fact from legend and myth, and have assigned Tell and his shot to the realm of myth and poetry where he lives in immortal beauty.

The story of Tell is not found recorded until toward the end of the fifteenth century in the *Tellenlied* and the *White Book*. In the utter absence of other information or proof about Tell, the resemblance between this story and what is narrated by an earlier mediæval historian, whose work just before this time became known in Germany and Switzerland, is so close as to justify us in seeking no further for the source of this tale of the archer-hero. And that a most ancient myth is the ultimate source of this historian's account is proved by the existence in almost all parts of the world of similar stories—not only among all the Germanic peoples, in Germany, England, Scandinavia, Iceland, but also in Italy, Greece, Persia, India, and even in non-Aryan lands.

The historian just referred to was the Dane Saxo Grammaticus, who lived in the twelfth century and,

nearly a hundred and fifty years before the alleged exploit of Tell, wrote his *Historia Danorum Regum Heroumque*. Saxo tells his story of a certain Toko (also Tokko, Palna Toko, and Palnatoki), a soldier in the army of King Harald Blaatand (Bluetooth) in the tenth century. Toko once boasted to his comrades at a feast that he was so skillful with the bow as to hit far off with the first arrow an apple ever so small, fastened on a stick. Envious rivals reported this utterance to the king, who wickedly ordered the apple to be laid on the head of Toko's own son, and declared that if the father did not hit the apple with the first arrow, his life should be forfeited as a punishment for his boasting. Toko had to obey, stationed his son, admonished him not to move his head at the noise of the arrow, and turned the boy's face from him. Then taking three arrows from his quiver, Toko placed one upon his bow and shooting hit the apple with this first arrow. To the king's inquiry hereupon why he had taken out three arrows, when he was required to shoot only one, he replied: "In order to kill you who give to others such cruel commands, that is, in case I had missed with the first shot." Toko was also an expert skater (as Tell a boatsman) and was forced by the king to a trial of his skill that endangered his life. Finally, in revenge for the wrongs and insults which the king had done him, Toko from an ambush mortally wounded the king with an arrow (as Tell slays Gessler).

Of all the numerous forms in which this archer-story appears with great variations in names and incidents, this Danish version is the only one which is altogether similar to the oldest Swiss form of the Tell story.

The conclusion is hard to resist, that Saxo's work, or the extract (containing the apple-story) made from it about 1430 by a German monk, Gheysmer, became known to some Swiss scholar of the fifteenth century, who simply transferred this archer-hero to Swiss soil and made him the champion of Uri's claims to the first place in the achievement of Swiss liberty. It is also possible that the ancient Germanic myth had been kept alive in some form by oral tradition among the common people, after having been brought by their ancestors from their northern home, and that this popular tradition, alone or through its adoption and reconstruction by some scholar acquainted with Saxo's history, was the origin of our Tell.\*

The most natural explanation of both the relationship and the wide distribution of these archer-stories

\* We have little fact and much conjecture as to the origin and significance of the name Wilhelm Tell. A noted Swiss historian is authority for the statement that the name Wilhelm perhaps does not occur a single time in the historical documents of the Forest Cantons. It is then not impossible that this name is due to the borrowing by some learned man of the name of the hero of the similar story told in the old English ballad of William of Cloudesly. The second name appears in various forms, Tell, Täll, Thell, Thall, Tall, of which the last seems to have been the earliest. In the *White Book* the definite article always stands before the form Thall or Tall, and the author evidently understood it to mean "foolish," "simple" (cf. l. 1872). In this sense the word would be connected with the words *dalen* or *talen*, 'to talk or act foolishly,' and with *toll*, "mad" (*Eng.* "dull"). Jacob Grimm connected Tell in the sense of "archer" with the Latin word *telum*, "arrow"; it is also conceivable that a learned man of the fifteenth century should have made this fanciful construction.

is that they are all variant developments of one and the same primitive nature-myth. The oldest element of this myth is the sunbeam or the lightning-bolt conceived as an arrow and shot forth by the god Wotan or Odin, as sun-god or summer-god, in conflict with and destruction of storm-cloud and winter, conceived as the common enemies of mankind.

#### POETIC TREATMENT.

Schiller did not merely passively receive his material from Müller and Tschudi, but, as he himself said, he reconstructed it poetically.

For some features of this reconstruction he was indebted to earlier dramas. Of these the earliest were the old Urner play already mentioned and its revision by Jacob Ruef in the year 1545. Of the others, all written after 1760, the most important are these: the French tragedy, *Guillaume Tell*, in alexandrine verse of Lemierre in 1767; the four dramas of the Swiss J. J. Bodmer in 1775,—(1) *Wilhelm Tell oder der gefährliche Schuss*, (2) *Gessler's Tod oder das erlegte Raubtier*, (3) *Der alte Heinrich von Melchthal oder die ausgestreuten Augen*, (4) *Der Hass der Tyrannie und nicht der Person, oder Sarne durch List eingenommen*; the three plays of Joh. Ludwig Am Bühl,—(1) *Der Schweizerbund*, 1779, (2) *Hans von Schwaben oder Kaiser Alberts Tod*, 1784, (3) *Wilhelm Tell, ein schweizerisches Nationalschauspiel*, 1792. Further may be mentioned J. I. Zimmermann's *Wilhelm Tell*, 1777, A. G. Meissner's *Johann von Schwaben* and F. R. Crauer's *Kaiser Albrechts Tod*, both in 1780, J. B. Petri's *Der Dreybund*, 1791. The detailed comparison

of Schiller's drama with these its predecessors would only define without diminishing Schiller's originality. The following very general observations need only be made here. Of Melchthal, Stauffacher, and Fürst the essential traits occur in earlier plays. Attinghausen was elevated by Schiller, who also improved upon the earlier Rudenz. Of Bertha only the name occurred. Rudolf der Harras and the two soldiers who guard the hat were individualized by Schiller. Bodmer gave the name Hedwig to Tell's wife, who was introduced by Ruef and Lemierre. In the *Schweizerbund* of Am Bühl occurred the names Mechtilde, Stauffacher's wife; Gertrud, Tell's wife; and Bertha. These all reappear with Schiller, but are given to different characters.

Whether now Schiller drew his materials from legend, myth, historical and descriptive writings, earlier dramas, oral reports of others, or whencesoever, he so blended and transmuted them by the magic power of his poetic genius that his *Wilhelm Tell* is in the best sense his original creation. The archer-hero, the men of the Rütli, the liberty of the Forest Cantons, and the legendary origin of the Swiss Confederation, though dead to history, still live immortal "in the transfiguration into which Schiller has exalted them."

#### DRAMATIC STRUCTURE.

A drama is a scenic representation of an action (plot) of persons (characters) from its first inward inception to its final full accomplishment. This action ought to be *one* action, i.e., the drama ought to have unity of action. Since many critics have urged that

Schiller's *Tell* is especially defective in this chief respect, the question needs to be briefly considered.

It must indeed be granted that this play does not possess the simplest unity of having a single person as the all-dominating hero of a simple plot, for, in spite of the title, *Tell* is not in this sense its hero. The whole people of the Forest Cantons is the hero of this drama, and the one action which runs its course before our eyes is the achievement of deliverance from Austrian oppression and of united liberty. Since in this action all the people take part, the nobles must be represented no less than the yeoman or peasant class, both free and unfree. Moreover in such a struggle much room necessarily exists for the daring exploits of individual persons, which the single man Wilhelm Tell so beautifully exemplifies.

We are then in this drama to look for complex threefold unity: the *whole* people,—(1) as individuals exemplified by Tell, (2) in its sturdy yeomanry represented by those who enter into the Rütli-league, and (3) in its nobility represented by Attinghausen and Rudenz. In other words, the unity of action of this play is to be found in the blending of three partial plots,—the Tell-plot, the Yeomen-plot, and the Nobles-plot,—and in proportion as our conception of the play shall find these blended into unity shall we do justice to the play and its author.\* This is the point of view

\* What is here named the Nobles-plot has been most often called the Rudenz-plot or the Rudenz-Bertha plot, for which practice there is to be sure considerable justification in the author's manifest delight in the episode of the love of these two characters. But the designation "Nobles-plot" gives due importance to the rôle of Attinghausen, assigns a more fitting place to the persons and characters



of the following brief analysis, and of the running comment on action and character distributed through the Notes.

Schiller's *Wilhelm Tell* is a "Schauspiel," i.e., neither a tragedy nor a comedy but a serious drama, in which the hero is finally victorious. In construction, however, the serious drama does not differ essentially from the tragedy. According to the generally accepted view † the regular drama is composed of five main parts, usually but not necessarily coinciding with the acts. These parts are :

1. The *Exposition*, in which we are acquainted with the place, the time, the leading characters, the nature and importance of that conflict of interest, in which every drama centers. The exposition naturally consists of an Initial Chord (or Dramatic Overture), a detailed scene (or scenes) of Exposition proper, and a transition to the Initial Impulse (see below).

2. The *Ascending Action*, in which the conflict of

of Rudenz and Bertha, and makes it easier to find the harmonious unity of all the parts of the drama (*cf. Notes, pp. 259, 260*). A careful review of the references to Attinghausen and of the scenes in which he appears can hardly fail to bring the conviction that he is, to say the least, not inferior in importance to Rudenz. A further weighty consideration is the difficulty of supposing that Schiller, in view of the very patent relation of the subject-matter of *Tell* to the political conditions of the poet's own time and country, could have intended to depict a national uprising and liberation in which the nobility had no equal part.

† This view is best presented in G. Freytag's *Technik des Dramas*, of which an English translation by E. J. MacEwan under the title *Technique of the Drama* is published by Scott, Foresman & Co., Chicago.

interest becomes, by one stage or by several stages, more clear and intense, until is reached

3. The *Climax*, in which the result of the ascending action distinctly appears, the conflict of interest is most intense, and something happens that we immediately perceive to be decisive for the final outcome of this conflict.

4. The *Descending Action*, in which by one or by several stages the conflict of interest sinks to its final adjustment. (In tragedy this is the decline of the hero's fortune.)

5. The *Catastrophe*, the final adjustment of the conflict of interest, the natural and effective ending of the action. (In tragedy this requires usually the death of the hero, by which the Catastrophe is sharply distinguished from the Descending Action. In *Tell* the Descending Action is more gradually resolved into the Catastrophe.)

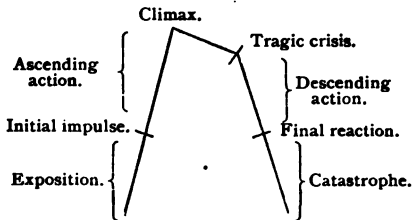
Connecting these five main parts there may also be three less extensive but very intensive scenes :

1. The *Initial Impulse*, which brings the conflict of interest into active play.

2. The *Tragic Crisis*, some unexpected but reasonable result of previously known causes, occurring usually soon after the Climax and of decisive importance for the conflict of interest.

3. The *Final Reaction*, a last hindering or retarding of the subsidence of the conflict of interest. (In tragedy a brief reaction in favor of the hero's fortune.) Of these three minor parts the first is essential, the last two are not and indeed are not distinct in *Tell*.

The relation of the eight parts just described is exhibited thus :



Since Act I would otherwise be too long, a part of the Exposition of *Wilhelm Tell* is found in Act II. The idyllic landscape and peaceful life with the quickly following storm strike strong and sweet the Initial Chord, the keynotes of the mood that suits this drama. The Exposition then quickly introduces the action proper, beginning with the

#### TELL-PLOT.

I. 1. **EXPOSITION** and transition to Initial Impulse, in the conversation of the men and Baumgarten's appeal.

**INITIAL IMPULSE.** Tell's rescue of Baumgarten keenly excites our interest in him personally, while it is plain that it will provoke the wrath of the governors against him.

I. 3. **ASCENDING ACTION.** *First Stage.* Conversation of Tell with Stauffacher in view of Keep Uri and the hat borne about upon the pole.

III. 1. *Second Stage.* Tell's home. Hedwig's forebodings. Tell's recital of his fateful meeting with Gessler and departure for Altorf, where we must expect Gessler to be.

III. 3. CLIMAX. The shooting at the apple.

TRAGIC CRISIS. This is here in some degree represented by Gessler's arresting Tell and taking him away for imprisonment, which is perhaps rather to be viewed as a preparatory stage of the descending action.

IV. 1. DESCENDING ACTION. *First Stage.* Tell's escape from the boat.

IV. 3. *Second Stage.* Tell's shooting Gessler.

FINAL REACTION. (Not represented.)

IV. 3 and V. 2, 3. CATASTROPHE. In some sense the Tell-plot ends with the death of Gessler, but we do not reach the final adjustment of his conflict until we see him permanently united in peace and happiness with his family and his people.

#### YEOMEN-PLOT.

I. 2. EXPOSITION. Conversation of Stauffacher with his wife Gertrud, in which her arguments and appeals are in contrast with the brief introductory words of Pfeifer. Stauffacher's decision to confer with Fürst and Attinghausen is the transition to the

I. 4. INITIAL IMPULSE. The blinding of Melchthal's father—this new unparalleled outrage—impels the three men who had come together only for counsel, to that action which is also the

ASCENDING ACTION. The formation of the alliance of Stauffacher, Fürst, and Melchthal and the plan of the Rütli-meeting.

II. 2. CLIMAX. The renewal at the Rütli of the old confederation to maintain their ancient liberty and to overthrow all tyranny.

TRAGIC CRISIS. (Not represented.)

III. 3. DESCENDING ACTION. *First Stage.* The behavior of the yeomen in connection with Tell's arrest and his shooting at the apple.

IV. 2. *Second Stage.* The nobles—in the persons of Attinghausen and Rudenz—recognize the independent action of the yeomen, while Rudenz and Melchthal resolve together to begin to execute the plans of the Rütli-meeting.

V. 1. *Third Stage.* Accomplishment of the Rütli-plans to reassert and maintain their liberty in (a) the expulsion of the governors and the destruction of the strongholds, and (b) the death of the Emperor.

FINAL REACTION. (Not represented.)

V. 1 and 3. CATASTROPHE. These events and the concluding picture are a guarantee of permanent freedom, unity, and peace.

#### NOBLES-PLOT.

II. 1. EXPOSITION. After brief preliminary mention of Attinghausen in I. 1, 2, and 4, the exposition proper in II. 1. Schiller's original intention was to place it in I, but this would have made that act too long. The transition to the initial impulse is the purpose of Rudenz to go to Altorf, and his departure thither.

III. 2. INITIAL IMPULSE. The mutual explanation between Bertha and Rudenz makes clear to the latter the conflict of his interest in patriotism and love with the Austrian purposes which he has been blindly favoring.

III. 3. ASCENDING ACTION. Rudenz, representing the younger nobility, begins actively to place himself on the side of the yeomen, his countrymen.

IV. 2. CLIMAX. Attinghausen, dying, blesses the confederation of the yeomanry, prophesies and rejoices in the entrance of the nobility into it. Rudenz identifies his interest with that of the confederation and determines the immediate execution of its plans.

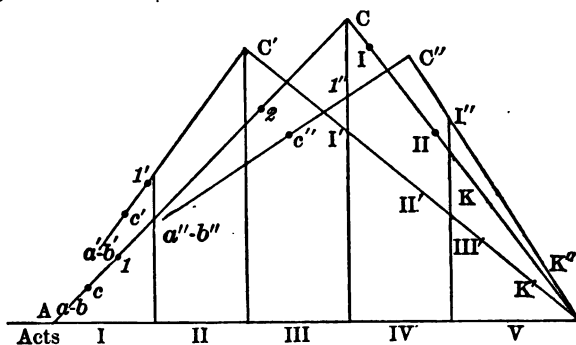
TRAGIC CRISIS. (Not represented.)

V. 1. DESCENDING ACTION. The action of Rudenz in taking and destroying the stronghold of Sarnen, and his being tacitly accepted by Melchthal as belonging to the confederation.

FINAL REACTION. (Not represented.)

V. 3. CATASTROPHE. Rudenz is united with Bertha, and in these two representatives the nobility enter also into the new order of freedom and unity.

The accompanying figure is intended to exhibit the outlines of the construction of these plots as here given.



EXPLANATION: *A* = Initial Chord; *a-b* (Tell-plot), *a'-b'* (Yeomen-plot), *a''-b'''* (Nobles-plot) = Exposition; *c, c', c''* = Initial Impulse; *1, 1', 1'', 2, 2', 2'', etc.* = Stages of Ascending Action; *C, C', C''* = Climax; *I, I', I'', II, II', II'', etc.* = Stages of Descending Action; *K, K', K''* = Catastrophe.

## VERSE. DICTION. STYLE.

While the predominating epic character of the subject-matter of *Tell* caused Schiller difficulties in respect of dramatic unity which, as has been said, many critics hold him not to have been wholly successful in overcoming, all—ingenuous readers and captious critics—agree in praising the verse, the diction, and in general the poetic treatment.

The verse\* does not differ essentially from the corresponding form in English. It is the blank verse, i.e., the iambic line normally having five unaccented and five accented syllables in regular alternation, and without rhyme. The liberties taken in contracting and expanding words, in varying the grammatical and rhetorical accent, in the use of the hiatus, in the number and location of the unaccented syllables, in lengthening or shortening the lines by increasing or diminishing the number of accents, and by employing after the fifth accent an unaccented syllable, so that the line has a feminine ending,—these liberties are just as in English. Schiller's use of the cæsura—change or pause in thought within the line, cutting it more or less sharply—is excellent. The cæsura comes usually after the second or the fourth accent, but may occur at any point in the line after the first accent. Rhyme is used with great effect to emphasize important passages and culminations of interest. Short poems in lyric measures stand at the opening of Acts I and III and at the end of Act IV. In all respects Schiller's use of verse-form in *Tell* is noble, free, artistic.

\* For minute details of versification reference is made to E. Belling, *Die Metrik Schillers*, pp. 217 ff., and to Breul, *Schillers Tell*, pp. xlix ff.

The diction of this drama is for the most part simple and popular in the best sense ; not without dignity and stateliness, but never consciously rhetorical, stilted. Its beauty is enhanced by the same licenses as are usual in English. Many words and phrases have been taken from the homely, vigorous, direct language of the old chroniclers ; with these harmonize fully the elements coming directly or indirectly from the Bible and from Homer. A poetical, rhythmical diction, since, as Schiller himself said, it treats all characters and situations according to one law, does not readily admit sharp distinctions and contrasts in the manner of speaking. Nevertheless many of the persons in the play are characterized and individualized in no small measure by their language. That the diction of this drama is at once simple and strong is shown by the very large number of popular quotations drawn from it, of which the commonest are printed in the Appendix, pp. 289, 290.

But not only the superficial fitness and beauty of the verse-form and language deserve high praise. Of the character-drawing in general Freytag says : " For more than half a century the splendid nobility of Schiller's characters ruled the German stage ; yet the weak imitators of his style did not understand that the fullness of his diction produced such great effects only because a wealth of dramatic life is covered by it as by costly gilding." Attention is called in the Notes to the prominent traits of the characters, which are not merely full of dramatic life, but wonderfully true to nature. Thus one of the earliest Swiss critics wrote : " One would readily make oath that Schiller had lived the greatest part of his life in Schwyz or



Uri among these simple, unpretending, vigorous people. Such *are* these little known mountaineers in the hours of trouble; . . . thus do they think, thus act. . . . It is almost incomprehensible how a man who has perhaps never seen Switzerland, or at least only for a short time, has by his genius been able to individualize the thoughts and feelings of each of these people."

While perhaps somewhat long and detailed study and comparison are necessary to appreciate Schiller's poetic genius and dramatic art in respect of his unifying mastery of the materials he drew from legend and history, and in respect of verse, diction, and character-drawing, every reader or spectator feels at once and forever that the poet brings Switzerland itself immediately before him. We all feel with Gustav Schwab, who said that nature is so reflected in *Tell* that every one who has earlier read the drama thinks on seeing the country that he has already beheld it in dreamlike transfiguration, or, better, with Carriere: "One who has read *Tell* and then visits Switzerland feels as if he had already seen it all, and that which seemed an ideal picture of the imagination becomes actual and living reality."

Schiller's genius and art are nowhere more splendidly manifest\* than in this creation of true men in that true Switzerland, of which he makes Tell himself say with suggestion of the vital relation between the land and its people:

*Das Haus der Freiheit hat uns Gott gegründet.*

\* In the Appendix, pp. 291-295, may be found, in translation, passages of penetrating and sympathetic comment on that which here is merely pointed out, from K. Heinrich von Stein: *Goethe und Schiller. Beiträge zur Ästhetik der deutschen Klassiker.*

Wilhelm Tell

Schauspiel

von

Schiller.

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Zum Neujahrsgeſchenk

auf 1805.

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Lüdingen,

in der B. G. Cotta'schen Buchhandlung.

1804.

[Photographic reproduction of title-page to the first edition.]



## Personen.

Hermann Gessler, Reichsvogt in Schwyz und Uri.  
Werner, freiherr von Uttinghausen, Bannerherr.  
Ulrich von Rudenz, sein Nefse.  
Werner Stauffacher,  
Konrad Hunn,  
Jitel Reding,  
Hans auf der Mauer, } Kandleute aus Schwyz.  
Jörg im Hofe,  
Ulrich der Schmid,  
Jost von Weiler,  
Walther Fürst,  
Wilhelm Tell,  
Rösselmann, der Pfarrer,  
Petermann, der Sigrift, } aus Uri.  
Kuoni, der Hirt,  
Werni, der Jäger,  
Ruodi, der Fischer,  
Arnold vom Melchthal,  
Konrad Baumgarten,  
Meier von Sarnen,  
Struth von Winkelried, } aus Unterwalden.  
Klaus von der Gläe,  
Burkhard am Bähel,  
Arnold von Sewa,  
Pfeifer von Luzern.  
Kunz von Gersau.  
Jenni, Fischerknabe.  
Seppe, Hirtenknabe.  
Gertrud, Stauffachers Gattin.  
Hedwig, Tells Gattin, Fürsts Tochter.  
Bertha von Bruned, eine reiche Erbin.  
Armgard, }  
Mechthild, } Bäuerinnen.  
Elsbeth, }  
Hildegard, }  
Walther, } Tells Knaben.  
Wilhelm, }  
Friedhardt, } Söldner.  
Leuthold, }  
Rudolf der Harras, Gesslers Stallmeister.  
Johannes Parricida, Herzog von Schwaben.  
Stässi, der Flurichäg.  
Der Stier von Uri.  
Ein Reichsbote.  
Fronvogt.  
Meister Steinmeg, Gesellen und Handlanger.  
Öffentliche Ausrufer.  
Barmherzige Brüder.  
Gesslerische und Landenbergische Reiter.  
Viele Kandleute, Männer und Weiber aus den Waldstätten.

## Erster Aufzug.

### Erste Scene.

Hohes Felsenufer des Vierwaldstättersees,  
Schwyz gegenüber.

Der See macht eine Bucht ins Land, eine Hütte ist unweit dem Ufer, Fischerknabe fährt sich in einem Rahn. Über den See hinweg sieht man die grünen Matten, Dörfer und Höfe von Schwyz im hellen Sonnenschein liegen. Zur Linken des Zuschauers zeigen sich die Spitzen des Hafens, mit Wollen umgeben; zur Rechten im fernen Hintergrund sieht man die Eisgebirge. Noch ehe der Vorhang aufgeht, hört man den Ruhreihen und das harmonische Geläut der Herdenglocken, welches sich auch bei eröffneter Scene noch eine Zeit lang fortsetzt.

Fischerknabe (Angt im Rahn).

Melodie des Ruhreihens.

Es lächelt der See, er ladet zum Bade,  
Der Knabe schlief ein am grünen Gestade,  
Da hört er ein Klingen,  
Wie Flöten so süß,  
Wie Stimmen der Engel  
Im Paradies.

Und wie er erwachet in seliger Lust,  
Da spülen die Wasser ihm um die Brust,  
Und es ruft aus den Tiefen:  
Lieb Knabe, bist m e i n!  
Ich locke den Schläfer,  
Ich zieh' ihn herein.

Hirt (auf dem Berge).

Variation des Aubreihens.

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl,  
 Ihr sonnigen Weiden!  
 Der Senne muß scheiden, 15  
 Der Sommer ist hin.

Wir fahren zu Berg, wir kommen wieder,  
 Wenn der Ruckuck ruft, wenn erwachen die Lieder,  
 Wenn mit Blumen die Erde sich kleidet neu,  
 Wenn die Brunnlein fließen im lieblichen Mai. 20

Ihr Matten, lebt wohl,  
 Ihr sonnigen Weiden!  
 Der Senne muß scheiden,  
 Der Sommer ist hin.

Alpenjäger (erscheint gegenüber auf der Höhe des Felsen).  
 Zweite Variation.

Es donnern die Höhen, es zittert der Steg, 25  
 Nicht grauet dem Schützen auf schwindlichem Weg;  
 Er schreitet verwegen  
 Auf Feldern von Eis;  
 Da pranget kein Frühling,  
 Da grünnet kein Reis; 30  
 Und unter den Füssen ein neblisches Meer,  
 Erkennt er die Städte der Menschen nicht mehr;  
 Durch den Riß nur der Wolken  
 Erblickt er die Welt,  
 Tief unter den Wassern 35  
 Das grünende Feld.

(Die Landschaft verändert sich, man hört ein dumpfes Krachen von den Bergen, Schatten von Wolken laufen über die Gegend.)

Ruodi, der Fischer, kommt aus der Gütte. Werni, der Jäger, steigt vom Felsen, Ruoni, der Hirt, kommt mit dem Melkmaß auf der Schulter, Seppi, sein Hundbube, folgt ihm,

Kuodi.

Mach' hurtig, Jenni! Zieh' die Naue ein!  
 Der graue Thalvogt kommt, dumpf brüllt der Firn,  
 Der Mythenstein zieht seine Haube an,  
 Und kalt her bläst es aus dem Wetterloch;  
 Der Sturm, ich mein', wird da sein, eh' wir's denken.

40

Kuoni.

's kommt Regen, Fährmann. Meine Schafe fressen  
 Mit Begierde Gras, und Wächter scharrt die Erde.

Werni.

Die Fische springen, und das Wasserhuhn  
 Taucht unter. Ein Gewitter ist im Anzug.

45

Kuoni (zum Buben.)

Rug, Seppi, ob das Vieh sich nicht verlaufen.

Seppi.

Die braune Rifel kenn' ich am Geläut.

Kuoni.

So fehlt uns keine mehr, die geht am weitsten.

Kuodi.

Ihr habt ein schön Geläute, Meister Hirt.

Werni.

Und schmuckes Vieh — Ist's euer eignes, Landsmann? 50

Kuoni.

Bin nit so reich — 's ist meines gnäd'gen Herrn,  
 Des Attinghäusers, und mir zugezählt.

Kuodi.

Wie schön der Kuh das Band zu Halse steht!



Kuoni.

Das weiß sie auch, daß sie den Reihem führt,  
Und, nähm' ich ihr's, sie hörte auf zu fressen.

55

Kuodi.

Ihr seid nicht klug! Ein unvernünft'ges Vieh —

Werni.

Ist bald gesagt. Das Tier hat auch Vernunft,  
Das wissen wir, die wir die Gemsen jagen.  
Die stellen klug, wo sie zur Weide gehn,  
'ne Vorhut aus, die spitzt das Ohr und warnet  
Mit heller Pfeife, wenn der Jäger naht.

60

Kuodi (zum Hirten).

Treibt ihr jetzt heim?

Kuoni.

Die Alp ist abgeweidet,

Werni.

Glücksel'ge Heimkehr, Senn!

Kuoni.

Die wünsch' ich euch;

Von eurer Fahrt lehrt sich's nicht immer wieder.

Kuodi.

Dort kommt ein Mann in voller Hast gelaufen.

65

Werni.

Ich kenn' ihn, 's ist der Baumgart von Alzellen.

Ronrad Baumgarten (atemlos hereinstürzend.)

Baumgarten.

Um Gottes willen, Fährmann, euren Rahn!

Kuodi.

Nun, nun, was giebt's so eilig?

Baumgarten.

Bindet los!

Ihr rettet mich vom Tode! Setzt mich über!

Kuoni.

Landsmann, was habt ihr?

Werni.

Wer verfolgt euch denn? 70

Baumgarten (zum Fischer).

Eilt, eilt, sie sind mir dicht schon an den Fersen!  
 Des Landvogts Reiter kommen hinter mir;  
 Ich bin ein Mann des Todes, wenn sie mich greifen.

Kuodi.

Warum verfolgen euch die Reifigen?

Baumgarten.

Erst rettet mich, und dann steh' ich euch Rede. 75

Werni.

Ihr seid mit Blut besleckt, was hat's gegeben?

Baumgarten.

Des Kaisers Burgvogt, der auf Roßberg saß —

Kuoni.

Der Wolfenschießen! Läßt euch der verfolgen?

Baumgarten.

Der schadet nicht mehr, ich hab' ihn erschlagen.

Alle (fahren zurück).

Gott sei euch gnädig! Was habt ihr gethan? 80

Baumgarten.

Was jeder freie Mann an meinem Platz!  
 Mein gutes Hausrecht hab' ich ausgeübt  
 Am Schänder meiner Ehr' und meines Weibes.



Kuoni.

Hat euch der Burgvogt an der Ehr' geschädigt?

Baumgarten.

Daß er sein böß Gelüsten nicht vollbracht,  
Hat Gott und meine gute Art verhütet.

85

Werni.

Ihr habt ihm mit der Art den Kopf zerspalten?

Kuoni.

O, laßt uns alles hören, ihr habt Zeit,  
Bis er den Kahn vom Ufer losgebunden.

Baumgarten.

Ich hatte Holz gefällt im Wald, da kommt  
Mein Weib gelaufen in der Angst des Todes.

90

„Der Burgvogt lieg' in meinem Haus, er hab'  
Ihr anbefohlen, ihm ein Bad zu rüsten.

Drauf hab' er Ungebührliches von ihr  
Verlangt, sie sei entsprungen, mich zu suchen.“

95

Da lief ich frisch hinzu, so wie ich war,  
Und mit der Art hab' ich ihm's Bad gesegnet.

Werni.

Ihr thatet wohl, kein Mensch kann euch drum schelten.

Kuoni.

Der Wüterich! Der hat nun seinen Lohn!  
Hat's lang' verdient ums Volk von Unterwalden.

100

Baumgarten.

Die That ward ruchtbar; mir wird nachgesetzt —  
Indem wir sprechen — Gott — verrinnt die Zeit —

(Es fängt an zu donnern.)

Kuoni.

Frisch, Fährmann — schaff' den Wiedermann hinüber!

Kuodi.

Seht nicht. Ein schweres Ungewitter ist  
Im Anzug. Ihr müßt warten.

Baumgarten.

Heil'ger Gott!

105

Ich kann nicht warten. Jeder Aufschub tötet —

Kuoni (zum Fischer).

Greif an mit Gott! Dem Nächsten muß man helfen;  
Es kann uns allen Gleiches ja begegnen.

(Brausen und Donnern.)

Kuodi.

Der Föhn ist los, ihr seht, wie hoch der See geht;  
Ich kann nicht steuern gegen Sturm und Wellen.

110

Baumgarten (umfaßt seine Kniee):

So helf' euch Gott, wie ihr euch mein erbarmet —

Werni.

Es geht ums Leben, sei barmherzig, Fährmann!

Kuoni.

's ist ein Hausvater und hat Weib und Kinder!

(Wiederholte Donnerschläge.)

Kuodi.

Was? Ich hab' auch ein Leben zu verlieren,  
Hab' Weib und Kind daheim wie er — Seht hin,  
Wie's brandet, wie es wogt und Wirbel zieht  
Und alle Wasser aufrührt in der Tiefe.

115

— Ich wollte gern den Biedermann erretten;  
Doch es ist rein unmöglich, ihr seht selbst.

Baumgarten (noch auf den Knieen).

So muß ich fallen in des Feindes Hand,  
Das nahe Rettungsufer im Gesichte!

120

— Dort liegt's! Ich kann's erreichen mit den Augen,  
Hinüberdringen kann der Stimme Schall;  
Da ist der Rahn, der mich hinübertrüge,  
Und muß hier liegen, hilflos, und verzagen!

125

Kuoni.

Seht, wer da kommt!

Werni.

Es ist der Tell aus Bürglen.

(Tell mit der Armbrust.)

Tell.

Wer ist der Mann, der hier um Hilfe fleht?

Kuoni.

's ist ein Mzeller Mann, er hat sein' Ehr'  
Verteidigt und den Wolfenschieß erschlagen,  
Des Königs Burgvogt, der auf Roßberg saß —  
Des Landvogts Reiter sind ihm auf den Fersen.  
Er fleht den Schiffer um die Überfahrt;  
Der fürcht't sich vor dem Sturm und will nicht fahren.

130

Kuodi.

Da ist der Tell, er führt das Ruder auch,  
Der soll mir's zeugen, ob die Fahrt zu wagen.

135

Tell.

Wo's noht thut, Fährmann, läßt sich alles wagen.

(Eftige Donnerschläge, der See rauscht auf.)

Kuodi.

Ich soll mich in den Hölletrachen stürzen?  
Das thäte keiner, der bei Sinnen ist.

Tell.

Der brave Mann denkt an sich selbst zuletzt;  
Vertrau' auf Gott und rette den Bedrängten.

140

Kuodi.

Vom sichern Port läßt sich's gemächlich raten.  
Da ist der Rahn und dort der See! Versuch't's!

Tell.

Der See kann sich, der Landvogt nicht erbarmen.  
Versuch' es, Fährmann!

Hirten und Jäger.

Kett' ihn! Kett' ihn! Kett' ihn!

Kuodi.

Und wär's mein Bruder und mein leiblich Kind,  
Es kann nicht sein; 's ist heut' Simons und Judä,  
Da rast der See und will sein Opfer haben.

145

Tell.

Mit eitler Rede wird hier nichts geschafft;  
Die Stunde drängt, dem Mann muß Hilfe werden.  
Sprich, Fährmann, willst du fahren?

Kuodi.

Nein, nicht ich!

150

Tell.

In Gottes Namen denn! Gieb her den Rahn!  
Ich will's mit meiner schwachen Kraft versuchen.

Kuoni.

Ha, wackerer Tell!

Werni.

Das gleicht dem Weidgesellen!

Baumgarten.

Mein Ketter seid ihr und mein Engel, Tell!

Tell.

Wohl aus des Vogts Gewalt errett' ich euch!  
Aus Sturmes Nöten muß ein andrer helfen.

155

Doch besser ist's, ihr fallt in Gottes Hand  
Als in der Menschen!

(Zu dem Hirten.)

Landsmann, tröstet ihr  
Mein Weib, wenn mir was Menschliches begegnet.  
Ich hab' gethan, was ich nicht lassen konnte.

160

(Er springt in den Rahn.)

Kuoni (zum Fischer).

Ihr seid ein Meister Steuermann. Was sich  
Der Tell getraut, das konntet ihr nicht wägen?

Kuodi.

Wohl befre Männer thun's dem Tell nicht nach,  
Es giebt nicht zwei, wie der ist, im Gebirge.

Werni (ist auf den Fels gestiegen).

Er stößt schon ab. Gott helf' dir, braver Schwimmer! 165  
Sieh, wie das Schifflein auf den Wellen schwankt!

Kuoni (am Ufer).

Die Flut geht drüber weg — Ich seh's nicht mehr.  
Doch, halt, da ist es wieder! Kräftiglich  
Arbeitet sich der Wackre durch die Brandung.

Peppi.

Des Landvogts Reiter kommen angesprengt.

170

Kuoni.

Weiß Gott, sie sind's! Das war Hilf' in der Not.

(Ein Trupp Sandenbergischer Reiter.)

Erster Reiter.

Den Mörder gebt heraus, den ihr verborgen!

Zweiter.

Des Wegs kam er, umsonst verhehlt ihr ihn.

Kuoni und Kuodi.

Wen meint ihr, Reiter?

Erster Reiter (entdeckt den Rachen).

Ha, was seh' ich! Teufel!

Werni (oben).

Ist's der im Rachen, den ihr sucht? — Reitt zu! 175  
Wenn ihr frisch beilegt, holt ihr ihn noch ein.

Zweiter.

Bermüthscht! Er ist entwisch't.

Erster (zum Hirten und Fischer).

Ihr habt ihm fortgeholfen.

Ihr sollt uns büßen — Fallt in ihre Herde!  
Die Hütte reißet ein, brennt und schlägt nieder!  
(Eilen fort.)

Seppi (stürzt nach).

O meine Lämmer!

Kuoni (folgt).

Weh mir! Meine Herde! 180

Werni.

Die Wütriche!

Kuodi (ringt die Hände).

Gerechtigkeit des Himmels!

Wann wird der Retter kommen diesem Lande?  
(Folgt ihnen.)

## Zweite Scene.

Zu Steinen in Schwyz. Eine Linde vor des  
Stauffachers Hause an der Landstraße,  
nächst der Brücke.

Werner Stauffacher, Pfeifer von Luzern kommen im Gespräch.

Pfeifer.

Ja, ja, Herr Stauffacher, wie ich euch sagte.  
Schwört nicht zu Östreich, wenn ihr's könnt vermeiden.  
Haltet fest am Reich und wacker wie bisher. 185  
Gott schirme euch bei eurer alten Freiheit!

(Drückt ihm herzlich die Hand und will gehen.)

Stauffacher.

Bleibt doch, bis meine Wirtin kommt — ihr seid  
Mein Gast zu Schwyz, ich in Luzern der eure.

Pfeifer.

Biel Dank! Muß heute Gersau noch erreichen.  
— Was ihr auch Schweres mögt zu leiden haben 190  
Von eurer Bögte Geiz und Übermut,  
Tragt's in Geduld! Es kann sich ändern, schnell,  
Ein anderer Kaiser kann ans Reich gelangen.  
Seid ihr erst Osterreichs, seid ihr's auf immer.

(Er geht ab. Stauffacher setzt sich kummervoll auf eine Bank unter  
der Linde. So findet ihn Gertrud, seine Frau, die sich neben ihn stellt  
und ihn eine Zeit lang schweigend betrachtet.)

Gertrud.

So ernst, mein Freund? Ich kenne dich nicht mehr. 195  
Schon viele Tage seh' ich's schweigend an,  
Wie finstrier Trübsinn deine Stirne furcht.  
Auf deinem Herzen drückt ein still Gebreften;

Bertrau' es mir; ich bin dein treues Weib,  
Und meine Hälfte fordr' ich deines Grams. 200

(Stauffacher reicht ihr die Hand und schweigt.)

Was kann dein Herz beklemmen, sag' es mir.  
Gesegnet ist dein Fleiß, dein Glücksstand blüht,  
Voll sind die Scheunen, und der Rinder Scharen,  
Der glatten Pferde wohlgenährte Zucht  
Ist von den Bergen glücklich heimgebracht 205  
Zur Winterung in den bequemen Ställen.

— Da steht dein Haus, reich, wie ein Edelsitz;  
Von schönem Stammholz ist es neu gezimmert  
Und nach dem Richtmaß ordentlich gefügt;  
Von vielen Fenstern glänzt es wohnlich, hell; 210  
Mit bunten Wappenschildern ist's bemalt  
Und weisen Sprüchen, die der Wandersmann  
Verweilend liest und ihren Sinn bewundert.

Stauffacher.

Wohl steht das Haus gezimmert und gefügt,  
Doch, ach — es wankt der Grund, auf dem wir bauten. 215

Gertrud.

Mein Werner, sage, wie verstehst du das?

Stauffacher.

Vor dieser Uinde saß ich jüngst, wie heut',  
Das schön Vollbrachte freudig überdenkend,  
Da kam daher von Rüg'nacht, seiner Burg,  
Der Bogt mit seinen Reifigen geritten. 220

Vor diesem Hause hielt er wundernd an;  
Doch ich erhob mich schnell, und unterwürfig,  
Wie sich's gebührt, trat ich dem Herrn entgegen;  
Der uns des Kaisers richterliche Macht  
Vorstellt im Lande. „Wessen ist dies Haus?“ 225



Fragt' er bösmeinend, denn er wußt' es wohl.  
 Doch schnell besonnen ich entgegn' ihm so:  
 „Dies Haus, Herr Vogt, ist meines Herrn des Kaisers,  
 Und eures, und mein Lehen“ — Da versetzt er:  
 „Ich bin Regent im Land an Kaisers Statt 230  
 Und will nicht, daß der Bauer Häuser baue  
 Auf seine eigne Hand und also frei  
 Hinleb', als ob er Herr wär' in dem Lande;  
 Ich werd' mich unterstehn, euch das zu wehren.“  
 Dies sagend, ritt er truziglich von dannen, 235  
 Ich aber blieb mit kummervoller Seele,  
 Das Wort bedenkend, das der Böse sprach.

Gertrud.

Mein lieber Herr und Ehemirt! Magst du  
 Ein redlich Wort von deinem Weib vernehmen?  
 Des edeln Jbergs Tochter rühm' ich mich, 240  
 Des vielerfahrenen Manns. Wir Schwestern saßen,  
 Die Wolle spinnend, in den langen Nächten,  
 Wenn bei dem Vater sich des Volkes Häupter  
 Versammelten, die Pergamente lasen  
 Der alten Kaiser, und des Landes Wohl 245  
 Bedachten in vernünftigem Gespräch.  
 Aufmerkend hört' ich da manch kluges Wort,  
 Was der Verständig'ge denkt, der Gute wünscht,  
 Und still im Herzen hab' ich mir's bewahrt.  
 So höre denn und acht' auf meine Rede! 250  
 Denn, was dich preßte, sieh, das wußt' ich längst.  
 — Dir grollt der Landvogt, möchte gern dir schaden,  
 Denn du bist ihm ein Hindernis, daß sich  
 Der Schwytzer nicht dem neuen Fürstenhaus  
 Will unterwerfen, sondern treu und fest 255  
 Beim Reich beharren, wie die würdigen

Altvordern es gehalten und gethan. —  
Ist's nicht so, Werner? Sag' es, wenn ich lüge!

**Stauffacher.**

So ist's, das ist des Geflers Groll auf mich.

**Gertrud.**

Er ist dir neidisch, weil du glücklich wohnst, 260

Ein freier Mann auf deinem eignen Erb'

— Denn er hat keins. Vom Kaiser selbst und Reich

Trägst du dies Haus zu Lehn; du darfst es zeigen,

So gut der Reichsfürst seine Länder zeigt;

Denn über dir erkennst du keinen Herrn 265

Als nur den Höchsten in der Christenheit —

Er ist ein jüngerer Sohn nur seines Hauses,

Nichts nennt er sein als seinen Rittermantel;

Drum sieht er jedes Niedermannes Glück

Mit scheelen Augen gift'ger Mißgunst an. 270

Dir hat er längst den Untergang geschworen —

Noch stehst du unverehrt — Willst du erwarten,

Bis er die böse Lust an dir gebüßt?

*Der kluge Mann bau' vor.*

**Stauffacher.**

Was ist zu thun?

**Gertrud** (tritt näher).

So höre meinen Rat! Du weißt, wie hier 275

Zu Schwyz sich alle Redlichen beklagen

Ob dieses Landvogts Geiz und Witterel.

So zweifle nicht, daß sie dort drüben auch

In Unterwalben und im Urner Land

Des Oranges müß' sind und des harten Fochs — 280

Denn, wie der Gefler hier, so schäfft es frech

Der Landenberger drüben überm See —  
 Es kommt kein Fischertahn zu uns herüber,  
 Der nicht ein neues Unheil und Gewalt-  
 Beginnen von den Bögten uns verkündet. 285  
 Drum thät' es gut, daß eurer etliche,  
 Die's redlich meinen, still zu Räte gingen,  
 Wie man des Drucks sich möcht' erlebigen;  
 So acht' ich wohl, Gott würd' euch nicht verlassen  
 Und der gerechten Sache gnädig sein — 290  
 Hast du in Uri keinen Gastfreund, sprich,  
 Dem du dein Herz magst redlich offenbaren?

### Stauffacher.

Der wackern Männer kenn' ich viele dort  
 Und angesehen große Herrenleute,  
 Die mir geheim sind und gar wohl vertraut. 295  
 (Er steht auf.)  
 Frau, welchen Sturm gefährlicher Gedanken  
 Weckst du mir in der stillen Brust! Mein Innerstes  
 Kehrst du ans Licht des Tages mir entgegen,  
 Und was ich mir zu denken still verbot,  
 Du sprichst's mit leichter Zunge kocklich aus. 300  
 — Hast du auch wohl bedacht, was du mir rätst?  
 Die wilde Zwietracht und den Klang der Waffen  
 Ruffst du in dieses friedgewohnte Thal —  
 Wir wagten es, ein schwaches Volk der Hirten,  
 In Kampf zu gehen mit dem Herrn der Welt? 305  
 Der gute Schein nur ist's, worauf sie warten,  
 Um loszulassen auf dies arme Land  
 Die wilden Horden ihrer Kriegesmacht,  
 Darin zu schalten mit des Siegers Rechten  
 Und unterm Schein gerechter Züchtigung  
 Die alten Freiheitsbriefe zu vertilgen. 310

Gertrud.

Ihr seid auch Männer, wisset eure Art  
Zu führen, und dem Nütigen hilft Gott!

Stauffacher.

O Weib! Ein furchtbar wütend Schrecknis ist  
Der Krieg; die Herde schlägt er und den Hirten.

315

Gertrud.

Ertragen muß man, was der Himmel sendet;  
Unbilliges erträgt kein edles Herz.

Stauffacher.

Dies Haus erfreut dich, das wir neu erbauten.  
Der Krieg, der ungeheure, brennt es nieder.

Gertrud.

Wißt' ich mein Herz an zeitlich Gut gefesselt,  
Den Brand wärf' ich hinein mit eigener Hand.

320

Stauffacher.

Du glaubst an Menschlichkeit! Es schonst der Krieg  
Auch nicht das zarte Kindlein in der Wiege.

Gertrud.

Die Unschuld hat im Himmel einen Freund!  
— Sieh vorwärts, Werner, und nicht hinter dich!

325

Stauffacher.

Wir Männer können tapfer fechtend sterben;  
Welch Schicksal aber wird das eure sein?

Gertrud.

Die letzte Wahl steht auch dem Schwächsten offen,  
Ein Sprung von dieser Brücke macht mich frei.

Stauffacher (stürzt in ihre Arme).

Wer solch ein Herz an seinen Busen drückt,  
Der kann für Herd und Hof mit Freuden fechten,

330

Und keines Königs Heermacht fürchtet er —  
 Nach Uri fahr' ich stehnden Fußes gleich,  
 Dort lebt ein Gastfreund mir, Herr Walthar Fürst,  
 Der über diese Zeiten denkt wie ich. 335  
 Auch find' ich dort den edeln Bannerherrn  
 Von Attinghaus — obgleich von hohem Stamm  
 Liebt er das Volk und ehrt die alten Sitten.  
 Mit ihnen beiden pfleg' ich Rats, wie man  
 Der Landesfeinde mutig sich erwehrt — 340  
 Leb' wohl — und, weil ich fern bin, führe du  
 Mit klugem Sinn das Regiment des Hauses —  
 Dem Pilger, der zum Gotteshause wallt,  
 Dem frommen Mönch, der für sein Kloster sammelt,  
 Gib reichlich und entlaß' ihn wohlgepflegt. 345  
 Stauffachers Haus verbirgt sich nicht. Zu äußerst  
 Am offenen Heerweg steht's, ein wirtlich Dach  
 Für alle Wandrer, die des Weges fahren.

(Indem sie nach dem Hintergrund abgehen, tritt Wilhelm Tell mit  
 Baumgarten vorn auf die Scene.)

Tell (zu Baumgarten.)

Ihr habt jetzt meiner weiter nicht von nöten.  
 Zu jenem Hause gehet ein; dort wohnt 350  
 Der Stauffacher, ein Vater der Bedrängten.  
 — Doch sieh, da ist er selber — Folgt mir, kommt!  
 (Gehen auf ihn zu; die Scene verwandelt sich.)

## Dritte Scene.

## Öffentlicher Platz bei Altorf.

Auf einer Anhöhe im Hintergrund sieht man eine Feste bauen, welche schon so weit gediehen, daß sich die Form des Ganzen darstellt. Die hintere Seite ist fertig, an der vorderen wird eben gebaut, das Gerüste steht noch, an welchem die Werkleute auf und nieder steigen; auf dem höchsten Dach hängt der Schieferdedeck — alles ist in Bewegung und Arbeit.

Fronvogt. Meister Steinmetz. Gefellen und Handlanger.

Fronvogt (mit dem Stabe, treibt die Arbeiter).

Nicht lang' gefeiert, frisch! Die Mauersteine  
Herbei, den Kalk, den Mörtel zugefahren!  
Wenn der Herr Landvogt kommt, daß er das Werk  
Gewachsen sieht — Das schlendert wie die Schnecken. 355

(Zu zwei Handlangern, welche tragen.)

Heißt das geladen? Gleich das Doppelte!  
Wie die Tagdiebe ihre Pflicht bestehlen!

Erster Gesell.

Das ist doch hart, daß wir die Steine selbst  
Zu unserm Tving und Kerker sollen fahren! 360

Fronvogt.

Was murret ihr? Das ist ein schlechtes Volk,  
Zu nichts anständig, als das Vieh zu melken  
Und faul herum zu schlendern auf den Bergen.

Alter Mann (ruht aus).

Ich kann nicht mehr.

Fronvogt (schüttelt ihn).

Frisch, Alter, an die Arbeit!

Erster Gesell.

Habt ihr denn gar kein Eingeweid', daß ihr  
Den Greis, der kaum sich selber schleppen kann,  
Zum harten Frondienst treibt? 365

## Meister Steinmeh und Gesellen.

's ist himmelschreiend!

Fronvogt.

Sorgt ihr für euch; ich thu', was meines Amts.

Zweiter Gesell.

Fronvogt, wie wird die Feste denn sich nennen,  
Die wir da baun?

Fronvogt.

Zwing Uri soll sie heißen!

370

Denn unter dieses Joch wird man euch beugen.

Gesellen.

Zwing Uri!

Fronvogt.

Nun, was giebt's dabei zu lachen?

Zweiter Gesell.

Mit diesem Häuslein wollt ihr Uri zwingen?

Erster Gesell.

Laß sehn, wie viel man solcher Maulwurfshäufen  
Muß über 'nander setzen, bis ein Berg  
Draus wird, wie der geringste nur in Uri!

375

(Fronvogt geht nach dem Hintergrund.)

Meister Steinmeh.

Den Hammer werf' ich in den tiefsten See,  
Der mir gedient bei diesem Fluchgebäude!

(Tell und Stauffacher kommen.)

Stauffacher.

O, hätt' ich nie gelebt, um das zu schauen!

Tell.

Hier ist nicht gut sein. Laßt uns weiter gehn.

380

**Stauffacher.**

Bin ich zu Uri, in der Freiheit Land?

**Meister Steinmeh.**

O Herr, wenn ihr die Keller erst gesehn  
Unter den Türmen! Ja, wer die bewohnt,  
Der wird den Hahn nicht fürder krähen hören.

**Stauffacher.**

O Gott!

**Steinmeh.**

Seht diese Flanken, diese Strebepfeiler,  
Die stehn, wie für die Ewigkeit gebaut!

385

**Tell.**

Was Hände bauten, können Hände stürzen.

*(Nach den Bergen zeigend.)*

Das Haus der Freiheit hat uns Gott gegründet.

*(Man hört eine Trommel, es kommen Leute, die einen Hut auf einer Stange tragen; ein Ausrufer folgt ihnen, Weiber und Kinder dringen tumultuarisch nach.)*

**Erster Gesell.**

Was will die Trommel? Gebet acht!

**Meister Steinmeh.**

Was für

Ein Fastnachtsaufzug, und was soll der Hut?

390

**Ausrufer.**

In des Kaisers Namen! Höret!

**Gesellen.**

Still doch! Höret!

**Ausrufer.**

Ihr sehet diesen Hut, Männer von Uri!  
Aufrichten wird man ihn auf hoher Säule,



Mitten in Altorf, an dem höchsten Ort,  
 Und dieses ist des Landvogts Will' und Meinung: 395  
 Dem Hut soll gleiche Ehre wie ihm selbst geschehn.  
 Man soll ihn mit gebognem Knie und mit  
 Entblößtem Haupt verehren — Daran will  
 Der König die Gehorsamen erkennen.  
 Verfallen ist mit seinem Leib und Gut 400  
 Dem Könige, wer das Gebot verachtet.

(Das Volk lacht laut auf, die Trommel wird gerührt, sie gehen vorüber.)

**Erster Gesell.**

Welch neues Unerhörtes hat der Vogt  
 Sich ausgedenkt! Wir 'nen Hut verehren!  
 Sagt! Hat man je vernommen von dergleichen?

**Meister Steinmeh.**

Wir unsre Kniee beugen einem Hut! 405  
 Treibt er sein Spiel mit ernsthaft würd'gen Leuten?

**Erster Gesell.**

Wär's noch die kaiserliche Kron'! So ist's  
 Der Hut von Osterreich; ich sah ihn hangen  
 Über dem Thron, wo man die Lehen giebt!

**Meister Steinmeh.**

Der Hut von Osterreich! Gebt acht, es ist 410  
 Ein Fallstrich, uns an Osterreich zu verraten!

**Gesellen.**

Kein Ehrenmann wird sich der Schmach bequemen.

**Meister Steinmeh.**

Kommt, laßt uns mit den andern Abred' nehmen.

(Sie gehen nach der Tiefe.)

**Tell (zum Stauffacher).**

Ihr wisset nun Bescheid. Lebt wohl, Herr Werner!

Stauffacher.

Wo wollt ihr hin? O, eilt nicht so von dannen. 415

Tell.

Mein Haus entbehrt des Vaters. Lebet wohl!

Stauffacher.

Mir ist das Herz so voll, mit euch zu reden.

Tell.

Das schwere Herz wird nicht durch Worte leicht.

Stauffacher.

Doch könnten Worte uns zu Thaten führen.

Tell.

Die einz'ge That ist jetzt Geduld und Schweigen. 420

Stauffacher.

Soll man ertragen, was unleidlich ist?

Tell.

Die schnellen Herrscher sind's, die kurz regieren.

— Wenn sich der Föhn erhebt aus seinen Schländen,

Löscht man die Feuer aus, die Schiffe suchen

Eilends den Hafen, und der mächt'ge Geist 425

Geht ohne Schaden spurlos über die Erde.

Ein jeder lebe still bei sich daheim;

Dem Friedlichen gewährt man gern den Frieden.

Stauffacher.

Meint ihr?

Tell.

Die Schlange sticht nicht ungereizt.

Sie werden endlich doch von selbst ermüden, 430

Wenn sie die Lande ruhig bleiben sehn.

Stauffacher.

Wir könnten viel, wenn wir zusammenstünden

Tell.

Beim Schiffbruch hilft der einzelne sich leichter.

Stauffacher.

So kalt verlaßt ihr die gemeine Sache?

Tell.

Ein jeder zählt nur sicher auf sich selbst.

435

Stauffacher.

Verbunden werden auch die Schwachen mächtig.

Tell.

Der Starke ist am mächtigsten allein.

Stauffacher.

So kann das Vaterland auf euch nicht zählen,  
Wenn es verzweiflungsvoll zur Nothwehr greift?

Tell (gibt ihm die Hand).

Der Tell holt ein verlornes Lamm vom Abgrund  
Und sollte seinen Freunden sich entziehen?

440

Doch, was ihr thut, laßt mich aus eurem Rath,  
Ich kann nicht lange prüfen oder wählen;  
Bedürft ihr meiner zu bestimmter That,  
Dann ruft den Tell, es soll an mir nicht fehlen.

445

(Gehen ab zu verschiedenen Seiten. Ein plötzlicher Aufstau entsteht um das Gerüfte.)

Meister Steinmetz (eilt hin).

Was giebt's?

Erster Gesell (kommt vor, rufend).

Der Schieferdecker ist vom Dach gestürzt.

(Bertha mit Gefolge.)

Bertha (stürzt herein).

Ist er zerschmettert? Rennet, rettet, helft —  
Wenn Hilfe möglich, rettet, hier ist Gold —

(Wirft ihr Beschmeide unter das Volk.)

Meister.

Mit eurem Golde — Alles ist euch feil  
 Um Gold; wenn ihr den Vater von den Kindern  
 Gerissen und den Mann von seinem Weibe,  
 Und Jammer habt gebracht über die Welt,  
 Denkt ihr's mit Golde zu vergüten — Geht!  
 Wir waren frohe Menschen, eh' ihr kamt;  
 Mit euch ist die Verzweiflung eingezogen.

Bertha (zu dem Fronvogt, der zurückkommt).

Lebt er?

(Fronvogt giebt ein Zeichen des Gegentheils.)

O unglücksel'ges Schloß, mit Flüchen  
 Erbaut, und Flüche werden dich bewohnen! (Geht ab.)

Vierte Scene.

Walther Fürsts Wohnung.

Walther Fürst und Arnold vom Melchthal treten zugleich ein  
 von verschiedenen Seiten.

Melchthal.

Herr Walther Fürst —

Walther Fürst.

Wenn man uns überraschte!  
 Bleibt, wo ihr seid. Wir sind umringt von Spähern. 460

Melchthal.

Bringt ihr mir nichts von Unterwalden? nichts  
 Von meinem Vater? Nicht ertrag' ich's länger,  
 Als ein Gefangner müßig hier zu liegen.  
 Was hab' ich denn so Sträfliches gethan,  
 Um mich gleich einem Mörder zu verbergen? 465

Dem frechen Buben, der die Ochsen mir,  
Das trefflichste Gespänn, vor meinen Augen  
Weg wollte treiben auf des Bogts Geheiß,  
Hab' ich den Finger mit dem Stab gebrochen.

Walther Fürst.

Ihr seid zu rasch. Der Bube war des Bogts; 470  
Von eurer Übrigkeit war er gesendet.  
Ihr wart in Straf' gefallen, mußtet euch,  
Wie schwer sie war, der Buße schweigend fügen.

Melchthal.

Ertragen sollt' ich die leichtfert'ge Rede  
Des Unverschämten: „Wenn der Bauer Brot 475  
Wollt' essen, mög' er selbst am Pfluge ziehn!“  
In die Seele schnitt' mir's, als der Bub' die Ochsen,  
Die schönen Tiere, von dem Pfluge spannte;  
Dumpf brüllten sie, als hätten sie Gefühl  
Der Ungebühr, und stießen mit den Hörnern; 480  
Da übernahm mich der gerechte Zorn,  
Und meiner selbst nicht Herr, schlug ich den Boten.

Walther Fürst.

O, kaum bezwingen wir das eigne Herz;  
Wie soll die rasche Jugend sich bezähmen!

Melchthal.

Mich jammert nur der Vater — Er bedarf 485  
So sehr der Pflege, und sein Sohn ist fern.  
Der Bogt ist ihm gehässig, weil er stets  
Für Recht und Freiheit redlich hat gestritten.  
Drum werden sie den alten Mann bedrängen;  
Und niemand ist, der ihn vor Unglimpf schütze. . . . . 490  
— Werde mit mir, was will, ich muß hinüber.

Walther Fürst.

Erwartet nur und faßt euch in Geduld,  
 Bis Nachricht uns herüber kommt vom Walde.  
 — Ich höre klopfen, geht — Vielleicht ein Bote  
 Vom Landvogt — Geht hinein — Ihr seid in Uri  
 Nicht sicher vor des Landenbergers Arm;  
 Denn die Tyrannen reichen sich die Hände.

495

Melchthal.

Sie lehren uns, was wir thun sollten.

Walther Fürst.

Geht!

Ich ruf euch wieder, wenn's hier sicher ist.

(Melchthal geht hinein.)

Der Unglückselige, ich darf ihm nicht  
 Gestehen, was mir Böses schwant — Wer klopft?  
 So oft die Thüre rauscht, erwart' ich Unglück.  
 Verrat und Argwohn lauscht in allen Ecken;  
 Bis in das Innerste der Häuser bringen  
 Die Boten der Gewalt; bald thät' es not,  
 Wir hätten Schloß und Kiegel an den Thüren.

500

505

(Er öffnet und tritt erstaunt zurück, da Werner Stauffacher hereintritt.)

Was seh' ich? Ihr, Herr Werner! Nun, bei Gott!  
 Ein werter, teurer Gast — kein beßrer Mann  
 Ist über diese Schwelle noch gegangen.  
 Seid hoch willkommen unter meinem Dach!  
 Was führt euch her? Was sucht ihr hier in Uri?

510

Stauffacher (ihm die Hand reichend).

Die alten Zeiten und die alte Schweiz.

Walther Fürst.

Die bringt ihr mit euch — Sieh, mir wird so wohl,

Warm geht das Herz mir auf bei eurem Anblick.  
 — Setzt euch, Herr Werner — Wie verließet ihr 515  
 Frau Gertrud, eure angenehme Wirtin,  
 Des weisen Jbergs hochverständ'ge Tochter?  
 Von allen Wandrern aus dem deutschen Land,  
 Die über Meinrads Zell nach Welschland fahren,  
 Rühmt jeder euer gastlich Haus — Doch, sagt, 520  
 Kommt ihr soeben frisch von Flüelen her  
 Und habt euch nirgend sonst noch umgesehn,  
 Eh' ihr den Fuß gesetzt auf diese Schwelle?

Stauffacher (setzt sich).

Wohl ein erstaunlich neues Werk hab' ich  
 Bereiten sehen, das mich nicht erfreute. 525

Walther Fürst.

O Freund, da habt ihr's gleich mit einem Blicke!

Stauffacher.

Ein solches ist in Uri nie gewesen —  
 Seit Menschendenken war kein Zwinghof hier,  
 Und fest war keine Wohnung als das Grab.

Walther Fürst.

Ein Grab der Freiheit ist's. Ihr nennt's mit Namen. 530

Stauffacher.

Herr Walther Fürst, ich will euch nicht verhalten,  
 Nicht eine müß'ge Neugier führt mich her;  
 Mich drücken schwere Sorgen — Drangsal hab' ich  
 Zu Haus verlassen, Drangsal find' ich hier.  
 Denn ganz unleidlich ist's, was wir erdulden, 535  
 Und dieses Dranges ist kein Ziel zu sehn.  
 Frei war der Schweizer von uralter her,  
 Wir find's gewohnt, daß man uns gut begegnet.

Marburger.  
Ihr Malter Leut, nit mit uns nit wofaltu,  
Mit uns ungen Muegen fupst ungen  
Mit Dicken, ungen Stogel, ungen  
Zu Gede ungen, ungen fust ungen.

Marburger.  
Nur ungen fust ungen ungen  
ungen, ungen ungen ungen  
Ist Gutz ungen ungen ungen.

LINES 531-534 AND 557-559 OF TELL MS.

Caroline von Wolsogen cut these lines from the original MS. of Tell and presented them to the wife of Professor Voigt, of Jena, as a memento of her brother-in-law. They are now in the possession of Professor Stengel in Marburg. (To face p. 30)





Ein solches war im Lande nie erlebt,  
Solang' ein Hirte trieb auf diesen Bergen. 540

Walther Fürst.

Ja, es ist ohne Beispiel, wie sie's treiben!  
Auch unser edler Herr von Attinghausen,  
Der noch die alten Zeiten hat gesehn,  
Meint selber, es sei nicht mehr zu ertragen.

Stauffacher.

Auch drüben unterm Wald geht Schweres vor, 545  
Und blutig wird's gebüßt — Der Wolfenschießen,  
Des Kaisers Vogt, der auf dem Roßberg hauste,  
Gelüsten trug er nach verbotner Frucht;  
Baumgartens Weib, der haushält zu Alzellen,  
Wollt' er zu frecher Ungebühr mißbrauchen, 550  
Und mit der Art hat ihn der Mann erschlagen.

Walther Fürst.

O, die Gerichte Gottes sind gerecht!  
— Baumgarten, sagt ihr? ein bescheidner Mann!  
Er ist gerettet doch und wohl geborgen?

Stauffacher.

Euer Eidam hat ihn übern See geflüchtet; 555  
Bei mir zu Steinen halt' ich ihn verborgen —  
— Noch Greulichers hat mir derselbe Mann  
Berichtet, was zu Sarnen ist gesehn;  
Das Herz muß jedem Biedermanne bluten.

Walther Fürst (aufmerksam).

Sagt an, was ist's?

Stauffacher.

Im Melchthal, da, wo man 560  
Eintritt bei Rerns, wohnt ein gerechter Mann,  
Sie nennen ihn den Heinrich von der Haldeu,  
Und seine Stimm' gilt was in der Gemeinde.

## Walther Fürst.

Wer kennt ihn nicht! Was ist's mit ihm? Vollendet!

Stauffacher.

Der Landenberger küßte seinen Sohn 565  
Um kleinen Fehlers willen, ließ die Ochsen,  
Das beste Paar, ihm aus dem Pfluge spannen;  
Da schlug der Knab' den Knecht und wurde flüchtig.

Walther Fürst (in höchster Spannung).

Der Vater aber — sagt, wie steht's um den?

Stauffacher.

Den Vater läßt der Landenberger fordern, 570  
Zur Stelle schaffen soll er ihm den Sohn,  
Und da der alte Mann mit Wahrheit schwört,  
Er habe von dem Flüchtling keine Kunde,  
Da läßt der Vogt die Folterknechte kommen —

Walther Fürst (springt auf und will ihn auf die andere Seite führen).

O, still, nichts mehr!

Stauffacher (mit steigendem Ton).

„Ist mir der Sohn entgangen, 575  
So hab' ich dich!“ — läßt ihn zu Boden werfen,  
Den spiz'gen Stahl ihm in die Augen bohren —

Walther Fürst.

Barmherz'ger Himmel!

Melchthal (stürzt heraus).

In die Augen, sagt ihr?

Stauffacher (erstaunt zu Walther Fürst).

Wer ist der Jüngling?

Melchthal (faßt ihn mit krampfhafter Bestigtheit).

In die Augen? Redet!

Walther Fürst.

O der Bejammernsmwürdige!

Stauffacher.

Wer ist's?

580

(Da Walther Fürst ihm ein Zeichen giebt.)

Der Sohn ist's? Allgerechter Gott!

Melchthal.

Und ich

Muß ferne sein! — In seine beiden Augen?

Walther Fürst.

Bezwinget euch! Ertragt es, wie ein Mann!

Melchthal.

Um meiner Schuld, um meines Frevels willen!

— Blind also? Wirklich blind und ganz geblendet? 585

Stauffacher.

Ich sagt's. Der Quell des Sehns ist ausgeflossen,  
Das Licht der Sonne schaut er niemals wieder.

Walther Fürst.

Schont seines Schmerzens.

Melchthal.

Niemals! niemals wieder!

(Er drückt die Hand vor die Augen und schweigt einige Momente; dann wendet er sich von dem einen zu dem andern und spricht mit sanfter, von Thränen ersticker Stimme.)

O, eine edle Himmelsgabe ist

Das Licht des Auges — Alle Wesen leben

590

Vom Lichte, jedes glückliche Geschöpf —

Die Pflanze selbst kehrt freudig sich zum Lichte.

Und er muß sitzen, fühlend, in der Nacht,

Im ewig Finstern — ihn erquickt nicht mehr

Der Matten warmes Grün, der Blumen Schmelz;

595

Die roten Firnen kann er nicht mehr schauen —  
 Sterben ist nichts — doch l e b e n und nicht s e h e n,  
 Das ist ein Unglück — Warum seht ihr mich  
 So jammernd an? Ich hab' zwei frische Augen  
 Und kann dem blinden Vater keines geben, 600  
 Nicht einen Schimmer von dem Meer des Lichts,  
 Das glanzvoll, blendend mir ins Auge bringt.

### Stauffacher.

Ach, ich muß euren Jammer noch vergrößern,  
 Statt ihn zu heilen — Er bedarf noch mehr!  
 Denn alles hat der Landvogt ihm geraubt; 605  
 Nichts hat er ihm gelassen, als den Stab,  
 Um nackt und blind von Thür zu Thür zu wandern.

### Melchthal.

Nichts als den Stab dem augenlosen Greis!  
 Alles geraubt und auch das Licht der Sonne,  
 Des Ärmsten allgemeines Gut — Jetzt rede 610  
 Mir keiner mehr von Bleiben, von Verbergen!  
 Was für ein feiger Elender bin ich,  
 Daß ich auf m e i n e Sicherheit gedacht  
 Und nicht auf deine! — dein geliebtes Haupt  
 Als Pfand gelassen in des Wütrichs Händen! 615  
 Feigherz'ge Vorsicht, fahre hin — Auf nichts  
 Als blutige Vergeltung will ich denken,  
 Hinüber will ich — Keiner soll mich halten —  
 Des Vaters Auge von dem Landvogt fordern —  
 Aus allen seinen Reifigen heraus 620  
 Will ich ihn finden — (Nichts liegt mir am Leben,  
 Wenn ich den heißen, ungeheuren Schmerz  
 In seinem Lebensblute fühle. (Er will gehen.)

## Walther Fürst.

Bleibt!

Was könnt ihr gegen ihn? Er sitzt zu Sarnen  
Auf seiner hohen Herrenburg und spottet  
Dhnmächt'gen Zorns in seiner sichern Feste.

625

## Melchthal.

Und wohnt' er droben auf dem Eispalast  
Des Schreckhorns oder höher, wo die Jungfrau  
Seit Ewigkeit verschleiert sitzt — ich mache  
Mir Bahn zu ihm; mit zwanzig Jünglingen,  
Gesinnt, wie ich, zerbrech' ich seine Feste.  
Und wenn mir niemand folgt, und wenn ihr alle,  
Für eure Hütten hang und eure Herden,  
Euch dem Tyrannenjoche beugt — die Hirten  
Will ich zusammenrufen im Gebirg,  
Dort, unterm freien Himmelsdache, wo  
Der Sinn noch frisch ist und das Herz gesund,  
Das ungeheuer Gräßliche erzählen.

630

635

## Stauffacher (zu Walther Fürst).

Es ist auf seinem Gipfel — Wollen wir  
Erwarten, bis das Äußerste —

## Melchthal.

Welch Äußerstes

640

Ist noch zu fürchten, wenn der Stern des Auges  
In seiner Höhle nicht mehr sicher ist?  
— Sind wir denn wehrlos? Wozu lernten wir  
Die Armbrust spannen und die schwere Wucht  
Der Streitart schwingen? Jedem Wesen ward  
Ein Notgewehr in der Verzweiflungsangst.  
Es stellt sich der erschöpfte Hirsch und zeigt  
Der Meute sein gefürchtetes Geweih;

645

Die Gemse reißt den Jäger in den Abgrund—  
 Der Pflugstier selbst, der sanfte Hausgenöß  
 Des Menschen, der die ungeheure Kraft  
 Des Halses duldsam unters Joch gebogen,  
 Springt auf, gereizt, weßt sein gewaltig Horn  
 Und schleudert seinen Feind den Wolken zu.)

650

Walther Fürst.

Wenn die drei Lande dächten wie wir drei,  
 So möchten wir vielleicht etwas vermögen.

655

Stauffacher.

Wenn Uri ruft, wenn Unterwalden hilft,  
 Der Schwyzzer wird die alten Bünde ehren.

Melchthal.

Groß ist in Unterwalden meine Freundschaft,  
 Und jeder wagt mit Freuden Leib und Blut,  
 Wenn er am andern einen Rücken hat  
 Und Schirm— O fromme Väter dieses Landes!  
 Ich stehe, nur ein Jüngling, zwischen euch,  
 Den Vielerfahrnen— meine Stimme muß  
 Bescheiden schweigen in der Landsgemeinde.  
 Nicht, weil ich jung bin und nicht viel erlebte,  
 Verachtet meinen Rat und meine Rede;  
 Nicht küstern jugendliches Blut, mich treibt  
 Des höchsten Jammers schmerzliche Gewalt,  
 Was auch den Stein des Felsen muß erbarmen.  
 Ihr selbst seid Väter, Häupter eines Hauses,  
 Und wünscht euch einen tugendhaften Sohn,  
 Der eures Hauptes heil'ge Locken ehre  
 Und euch den Stern des Auges fromm bewache.  
 O, weil ihr selbst an eurem Leib und Gut  
 Noch nichts erlitten, eure Augen sich

660

665

670

675

Noch frisch und hell in ihren Kreisen regen,  
 So sei euch darum unsre Not nicht fremd.  
 Auch über euch hängt das Tyrannenschwert,  
 Ihr habt das Land von Östreich abgewendet;  
 Kein anderes war meines Vaters Unrecht,  
 Ihr seid in gleicher Mitschuld und Verdammnis.

680

**Stauffacher** (zu Walther Fürst).

Beschließet ihr! Ich bin bereit zu folgen.

**Walther Fürst.**

Wir wollen hören, was die edeln Herrn  
 Von Sillinen, von Attinghausen raten —  
 Ihr Name, denk' ich, wird uns Freunde werben.

685

**Melchthal.**

Wo ist ein Name in dem Waldgebirg  
 Ehrwürdiger, als eurer und der eure?  
 An solcher Namen echte Währung glaubt  
 Das Volk, sie haben guten Klang im Lande.  
 Ihr habt ein reiches Erb' von Vätertugend  
 Und habt es selber reich vermehrt — Was braucht's  
 Des Edelmanns? Laßt's uns allein vollenden!  
 Wären wir doch allein im Land! Ich meine,  
 Wir wollten uns schon selbst zu schirmen wissen.

690

695

**Stauffacher.**

Die Edeln drängt nicht gleiche Not mit uns;  
 Der Strom, der in den Niederungen wüthet,  
 Bis jetzt hat er die Höhn noch nicht erreicht —  
 Doch ihre Hilfe wird uns nicht entstehn,  
 Wenn sie das Land in Waffen erst erblicken.

700

**Walther Fürst.**

Wäre ein Obmann zwischen uns und Östreich,  
 So möchte Recht entscheiden und Gesetz.



Doch, der uns unterdrückt, ist unser Kaiser  
 Und höchster Richter — so muß Gott uns helfen  
 Durch unsern Arm — Erforschet ihr die Männer 705  
 Von Schwyz, ich will in Uri Freunde werben.  
 Wen aber senden wir nach Unterwalden? —

Melchthal.

Mich sendet hin — Wem läg' es näher an —

Walther Fürst.

Ich geb's nicht zu; ihr seid mein Gast, ich muß  
 Für eure Sicherheit gewähren!

Melchthal.

Laßt mich!

710

Die Schliche kenn' ich und die Felsensteige;  
 Auch Freunde find' ich gnug, die mich dem Feind  
 Verhehlen und ein Obdach gern gewähren.

Stauffacher.

Laßt ihn mit Gott hinüber gehn. Dort drüben  
 Ist kein Verräter — So verabscheut ist  
 Die Tyrannei, daß sie kein Werkzeug findet.  
 Auch der Mzeller soll uns nid dem Wald  
 Genossen werben und das Land erregen.

715

Melchthal.

Wie bringen wir uns sichere Kunde zu,  
 Daß wir den Argwohn der Tyrannen täuschen?

720

Stauffacher.

Wir könnten uns zu Brunnen oder Treib  
 Versammeln, wo die Kaufmannsschiffe landen.

Walther Fürst.

So offen dürfen wir das Werk nicht treiben.

— Hört meine Meinung. Links am See, wenn man  
Nach Brunnen fährt, dem Wüthenstein grad' über, 725

Liegt eine Matte heimlich im Gehölz,  
Das Kütli heißt sie bei dem Volk der Hirten,  
Weil dort die Waldung ausgereüet ward.

Dort ist's, wo unsre Landmark und die eure (zu Melchthal)  
Zusammengrenzen, und in kurzer Fahrt (zu Stauffacher) 730  
Trägt euch der leichte Rahn von Schwyz herüber.

Auf öden Pfaden können wir dahin

Bei Nachtzeit wandern und uns still beraten.

Dahin mag jeder zehn vertraute Männer  
Mitbringen, die herzeimig sind mit uns, 735

So können wir gemeinsam das Gemeine  
Besprechen und mit Gott es frisch beschließen.

Stauffacher.

So sei's. Jetzt reicht mir eure biedre Rechte,  
Reicht ihr die eure her, und so, wie wir  
Drei Männer jetzt unter uns die Hände 740  
Zusammenflechten, redlich, ohne Falsch,  
So wollen wir drei Vänder auch zu Schutz  
Und Trug zusammenstehn auf Tod und Leben.

Walther Fürst und Melchthal.

Auf Tod und Leben!

(Sie halten die Hände noch einige Pausen lang zusammengeflochten  
und schweigen.)

Melchthal.

Blinder, alter Vater!

Du kannst den Tag der Freiheit nicht mehr schauen; 745  
Du sollst ihn hören. — Wenn von Alp zu Alp  
Die Feuerzeichen flammend sich erheben,

Die festen Schlösser der Tyrannen fallen,  
 In deine Hütte soll der Schweizer wallen,  
 Zu deinem Ohr die Freudenkunde tragen,  
 Und hell in deiner Nacht soll es dir tagen.

75°

(Sie gehen auseinander.)

## Zweiter Aufzug.

### Erste Scene.

Edelhof des Freiherrn von Attinghausen.

(Ein gotischer Saal, mit Wappenschildern und Helmen verziert. Der Freiherr, ein Greis von fünfundsichtig Jahren, von hoher, edler Statur, an einem Stabe, worauf ein Gemsenhorn, und in ein Pelzwannt gekleidet. Ruoni und noch sechs Knechte stehen um ihn her mit Bechen und Sensen. Ulrich von Rudenz tritt ein in Ritterkleidung.)

Rudenz.

Hier bin ich, Oheim — Was ist euer Wille?

Attinghausen.

Erlaubt, daß ich nach altem Hausgebrauch  
 Den Frühtrunk erst mit meinen Knechten theile.

(Er trinkt aus einem Becher, der dann in der Reihe herumgeht.)

Sonst war ich selber mit in Feld und Wald,  
 Mit meinem Auge ihren Fleiß regierend;  
 Wie sie mein Banner führte in der Schlacht;  
 Jetzt kann ich nichts mehr, als den Schaffner machen,  
 Und kommt die warme Sonne nicht zu mir,  
 Ich kann sie nicht mehr suchen auf den Bergen.  
 Und so, in enger stets und engerm Kreis,  
 Beweg' ich mich dem engesten und letzten,

755

760

Wo alles Leben stillsteht, langsam zu.  
Mein Schatte bin ich nur, bald nur mein Name.

**Kuoni** (zu Kudenz mit dem Becher.)

Ich bring's euch, Junker.

(Da Kudenz zaudert, den Becher zu nehmen.)

Trinket frisch! Es geht  
Aus einem Becher und aus einem Herzen.

765

**Attinghausen.**

Geht, Kinder, und wenn's Feierabend ist,  
Dann reden wir auch von des Lands Geschäften.

(Knechte gehen ab.)

**Attinghausen und Kudenz.**

**Attinghausen.**

Ich sehe dich gegürtet und gerüstet,  
Du willst nach Altorf in die Herrenburg?

770

**Kudenz.**

Ja, Oheim, und ich darf nicht länger säumen —

**Attinghausen** (setzt sich).

Hast du's so eilig? Wie? Ist deiner Jugend  
Die Zeit so karg gemessen, daß du sie  
An deinem alten Oheim müßt ersparen?

**Kudenz.**

Ich sehe, daß ihr meiner nicht bedürft,  
Ich bin ein Fremdling nur in diesem Hause.

775

**Attinghausen** (hat ihn lange mit den Augen gemustert).

Ja, leider bist du's. Leider ist die Heimat  
Zur Fremde dir geworden! — Uli! Uli!  
Ich kenne dich nicht mehr. In Seide prangst du,  
Die Pfauenfeder trägst du stolz zur Schau  
Und schlägst den Purpurmantel um die Schultern;

780

Den Landmann blickst du mit Verachtung an  
Und schämst dich seiner traulichen Begrüßung.

Rudenz.

Die Ehr', die ihm gebührt, geb' ich ihm gern;  
Das Recht, das er sich nimmt, verweig' ich ihm. 785

Attinghausen.

Das ganze Land liegt unterm schweren Jorn  
Des Königs — jedes Biedermannes Herz  
Ist kummervoll ob der tyrannischen Gewalt,  
Die wir erdulden. — dich allein rührt nicht  
Der allgemeine Schmerz — dich siehet man, 790  
Abtrünnig von den Deinen, auf der Seite  
Des Landesfeindes stehen, unsrer Not  
Hohnsprechend, nach der leichten Freude jagen  
Und buhlen um die Fürstengunst, indes  
Dein Vaterland von schwerer Geißel blutet. 795

Rudenz.

Das Land ist schwer bedrängt — Warum, mein Oheim?  
Wer ist's, der es gestürzt in diese Not?  
Es kostete ein einzig leichtes Wort,  
Um augenblicks des Dranges los zu sein  
Und einen gnäd'gen Kaiser zu gewinnen. 800  
Weh ihnen, die dem Volk die Augen halten,  
Daß es dem wahren Besten widerstrebt!  
Um eignen Vorteils willen hindern sie,  
Daß die Waldstätte nicht zu Östreich schwören,  
Wie ringsum alle Lande doch gethan. 805  
Wohl thut es ihnen, auf der Herrenbank  
Zu sitzen mit dem Edelmann — den Kaiser  
Will man zum Herrn, um keinen Herrn zu haben.

Attinghausen.

Muß ich das hören und aus deinem Munde!

## Rudenj.

Ihr habt mich aufgefordert, laßt mich enden! 810  
 — Welche Person ist's, Oheim, die ihr selbst  
 Hier spielt? Habt ihr nicht höhern Stolz, als hier  
 Landammann oder Bannerherr zu sein  
 Und neben diesen Hirten zu regieren?  
 Wie? Ist's nicht eine rühmlichere Wahl, 815  
 Zu huldigen dem königlichen Herrn,  
 Sich an sein glänzend Lager anzuschließen,  
 Als eurer eignen Knechte Pair zu sein  
 Und zu Gericht zu sitzen mit dem Bauer?

## Attinghausen.

Ach, Uli, Uli! Ich erkenne sie, 820  
 Die Stimme der Verführung! Sie ergriff  
 Dein offnes Ohr, sie hat dein Herz vergiftet.

## Rudenj.

Ja, ich verberg' es nicht — in tiefer Seele  
 Schmerz mich der Spott der Fremdlinge, die uns  
 Den B a u e r n a d e l schelten — Nicht ertrag' ich's, 825  
 Indes die edle Jugend ringsumher  
 Sich Ehre sammelt unter Habsburgs Fahnen,  
 Auf meinem Erb' hier müßig still zu liegen  
 Und bei gemeinem Tagewerk den Lenz  
 Des Lebens zu verlieren — Anderswo 830  
 Geschehen Thaten, eine Welt des Ruhms  
 Bewegt sich glänzend jenseits dieser Berge —  
 Mir rosten in der Halle Helm und Schild;  
 Der Kriegsbrommete mutiges Getön,  
 Der Heroldsruf, der zum Turniere ladet, 835  
 Er dringt in diese Thäler nicht herein;

Nichts als den R u h r e i h n und der Herbeglocken  
Einförmiges Geläut' vernehm' ich hier.

Attinghausen.

Verblendeter, vom eiteln Glanz verführt!  
Verachte dein Geburtsland! Schäme dich 840  
Der uralten frommen Sitte deiner Väter!  
Mit heißen Thränen wirst du dich dereinst  
Heim sehnen nach den väterlichen Bergen,  
Und dieses Herdenreihens Melodie,  
Die du in stolzem Überdruß verschmähst, 845  
Mit Schmerzenssehnsucht wird sie dich ergreifen,  
Wenn sie dir anklingt auf der fremden Erde.  
O, mächtig ist der Trieb des Vaterlands!  
Die fremde, falsche Welt ist nicht für dich;  
Dort an dem stolzen Kaiserhof bleibst du 850  
Dir ewig fremd mit deinem treuen Herzen!  
Die Welt, sie fördert andre Tugenden,  
Als du in diesen Thälern dir erworben.  
— Geh hin, verkaufe deine freie Seele,  
Nimm Land zu Lehen, werd' ein Fürstenknecht, 855  
Da du ein Selbstherr sein kannst und ein Fürst  
Auf deinem eignen Erb' und freien Boden.  
Ach, Uli! Uli! Bleibe bei den Deinen!  
Geh nicht nach Altorf — O, verlaß sie nicht,  
Die heil'ge Sache deines Vaterlands! 860  
— Ich bin der Letzte meines Stamms — mein Name  
Endet mit mir. Da hängen Helm und Schild;  
Die werden sie mir in das Grab mitgeben.  
Und muß ich denken bei dem letzten Hauch,  
Daß du mein brechend Auge nur erwartest, 865  
Um hinzugehn vor diesen neuen Lehenhof

Und meine edeln Güter, die ich frei  
Von Gott empfing, von Östreich zu empfangen!

**Rudenz.**

Vergebens widerstreben wir dem König,  
Die Welt gehört ihm; wollen wir allein 870

Uns eigensinnig steifen und verstocken,

Die Länderkette ihm zu unterbrechen,

Die er gewaltig rings um uns gezogen?

Sein sind die Märkte, die Gerichte, sein

Die Kaufmannsstraßen, und das Saumroß selbst, 875

Das auf dem Gotthard ziehet, muß ihm zollen.

Von seinen Ländern wie mit einem Netz

Sind wir umgarnet rings und eingeschlossen.

— Wird uns das Reich beschützen? Kann es selbst

Sich schützen gegen Östreichs wachsende Gewalt? 880

Hilft Gott uns nicht, kein Kaiser kann uns helfen.

Was ist zu geben auf der Kaiser Wort,

Wenn sie in Geld- und Kriegenot die Städte,

Die untern Schirm des Adlers sich geflüchtet,

Verpfänden dürfen und dem Reich veräußern? 885

— Nein, Oheim! Wohlthat ist's und weise Vorsicht,

In diesen schweren Zeiten der Parteiung

Sich anzuschließen an ein mächtig Haupt.

Die Kaiserkrone geht von Stamm zu Stamm,

Die hat für treue Dienste kein Gedächtnis; 890

Doch, um den mächt'gen Erbherrn wohl verdienen,

Heißt Saaten in die Zukunft streun.

**Attinghausen.**

Bist du so weise?

Willst heller sehn als deine edeln Väter,

Die um der Freiheit kostbarn Edelstein



Mit Gut und Blut und Heldenkraft gestritten? 895  
 — Schiff' nach Luzern hinunter, frage dort,  
 Wie Osterreichs Herrschaft lastet auf den Ländern!  
 Sie werden kommen, unsre Schaf' und Rinder  
 Zu zählen, unsre Alpen abzumessen,  
 — Den Hochflug und das Hochgewilde bannen 900  
 In unsern freien Wäldern, ihren Schlagbaum  
 An unsre Brücken, unsre Thore setzen,  
 Mit unsrer Armut ihre Länderkäufe,  
 Mit unserm Blute ihre Kriege zahlen —  
 — Nein, wenn wir unser Blut dran setzen sollen, — 905  
 So sei's für uns — wohlfeiler kaufen wir  
 Die Freiheit als die Knechtschaft ein!

## Rudenz.

Was können wir,  
 Ein Volk der Hirten, gegen Albrechts Heere!

## Attinghausen.

Lern' dieses Volk der Hirten kennen, Knabe!  
 Ich kenn's, ich hab' es angeführt in Schlachten, 910  
 Ich hab' es fechten sehen bei Tavenz-  
 Sie sollen kommen, uns ein Joch aufzwingen,  
 Das wir entschlossen sind nicht zu ertragen!  
 — O, lerne fühlen, welches Stamms du bist!  
 Wirf nicht für eiteln Glanz und Flitterschein 915  
 Die echte Perle deines Wertes hin —  
 Das Haupt zu heißen eines freien Volks,  
 Das dir aus Liebe nur sich herzlich weihet,  
 Das treulich zu dir steht in Kampf und Tod —  
 Das sei dein Stolz, des Adels rühme dich — 920  
 Die angeborenen Bande knüpfe fest,  
 Ans Vaterland, ans teure, schließ dich an,

Das halte fest mit deinem ganzen Herzen!

Hier sind die starken Wurzeln deiner Kraft;

Dort in der fremden Welt stehst du allein,

925

Ein schwankes Rohr; das jeder Sturm zerknickt.

O, komm, du hast uns lang' nicht mehr gesehn,

Versuch's mit uns nur e i n e n Tag — nur heute

Geh nicht nach Altorf — Hörst du? Heute nicht;

Den e i n e n Tag nur schenke dich den Deinen!

930

(Er faßt seine Hand.)

Rudenz.

Ich gab mein Wort — Laßt mich — Ich bin gebunden.

Attinghausen (läßt seine Hand los, mit Ernst).

Du bist gebunden — Ja, Unglücklicher,

Du bist's, doch nicht durch Wort und Schwur,

Gebunden bist du durch der Liebe Seile!

(Rudenz wendet sich weg.)

— Verbirg dich, wie du willst. Das Fräulein ist's,

935

Bertha von Bruneck, die zur Herrenburg

Dich zieht, dich fesselt an des Kaisers Dienst.

Das Ritterfräulein willst du dir erwerben

Mit deinem Abfall von dem Land — Betrüg dich nicht!

Dich anzulocken, zeigt man dir die Braut;

940

Doch deiner Unschuld ist sie nicht beschieden.

Rudenz.

Genug hab' ich gehört. Gehabt euch wohl! (Er geht ab.)

Attinghausen.

Wahnsinn'ger Jüngling, bleib! Er geht dahin!

Ich kann ihn nicht erhalten, nicht erretten —

So ist der Wolfenschießen abgefallen

945

Von seinem Land — so werden andre folgen;

Der fremde Zauber reißt die Jugend fort,

Gewaltfam strebend über unsre Berge.

— O unglücksel'ge Stunde, da das Fremde

In diese still beglückten Thäler kam, 950

Der Sitten fromme Unschuld zu zerstören!

Das Neue dringt herein mit Macht, das Alte,

Das Würd'ge scheidet, andre Zeiten kommen,

Es lebt ein andersdenkendes Geschlecht!

Was thu' ich hier? Sie sind begraben alle, 955

Mit denen ich gewaltet und gelebt.

Unter der Erde schon liegt m e i n e Zeit;

Wohl dem, der mit der neuen nicht mehr braucht zu  
leben!

(Geht ab.)

## Zweite Scene.

Eine Wiese von hohen Felsen und Wald  
umgeben.

Auf den Felsen sind Steige mit Geländern, auch Leitern, von denen man  
naheher die Landleute herabsteigen sieht. Im Hintergrunde zeigt sich der  
See, über welchem anfangs ein Mondregenbogen zu sehen ist. Den Pro-  
spect schließen hohe Berge, hinter welchen noch höhere Eisgebirge ragen.  
Es ist völlig Nacht auf der Scene, nur der See und die weißen Gletscher  
leuchten im Mondlicht.

Melchthal, Baumgarten, Winkelried, Meier von Sar-  
nen, Burkhardt am Büchel, Arnold von Sewa, Klaus  
von der Flüe und noch vier andere Landleute, alle bewaffnet.

Melchthal (noch hinter der Scene).

Der Bergweg öffnet sich, nur frisch mir nach!

Den Fels erkenn' ich und das Kreuzlein drauf;

Wir sind am Ziel, hier ist das Rütli. 960

(Treten auf mit Windlichtern.)

Winkelried.

Horch!

Hewa.

Ganz leer.

Meier.

's ist noch kein Landmann da. Wir sind  
Die ersten auf dem Platz, wir Unterwaldner.

Melchthal.

Wie weit ist's in der Nacht?

Baumgarten.

Der Feuermächter

Vom Selsisberg hat eben zwei gerufen.

965

(Man hört in der Ferne läuten.)

Meier.

Still! Horch!

Am Büchel.

Das Mettenglöcklein in der Waldkapelle  
Klingt hell herüber aus dem Schwyzerland.

Von der Klüe.

Die Luft ist rein und trägt den Schall so weit.

Melchthal.

Gehn einige und zünden Reisholz an,  
Daß es loh brenne, wenn die Männer kommen.

970

(Zwei Landleute gehen.)

Hewa.

's ist eine schöne Mondennacht. Der See  
Liegt ruhig da als wie ein ebner Spiegel.

Am Büchel.

Sie haben eine leichte Fahrt.

**Winkelried** (zeigt nach dem See).

Ha, seht!

Seht dorthin! Seht ihr nichts?

**Meier.**

Was denn? — Ja, wahrlich!

Ein Regenbogen mitten in der Nacht!

975

**Melchthal.**

Es ist das Licht des Mondes, das ihn bildet.

Don der Flie.

Das ist ein seltsam wunderbares Zeichen!  
Es leben viele, die das nicht gesehn.

**Hewa.**

Er ist doppelt; seht, ein blässerer steht drüber.

**Baumgarten.**

Ein Nachen fährt soeben drunter weg.

980

**Melchthal.**

Das ist der Stauffacher mit seinem Rahn,  
Der Biedermann läßt sich nicht lang erwarten.

(Seht mit Baumgarten nach dem Ufer.)

**Meier.**

Die Urner sind es, die am längsten säumen.

Am Hügel.

Sie müssen weit umgehen durchs Gebirg,  
Daß sie des Landvogts Kundschaft hintergehen.

985

(Unterdesseu haben die zwei Landleute in der Mitte des Plazes ein  
Feuer angezündet.)

**Melchthal** (am Ufer.)

Wer ist da? Gebt das Wort!

**Stauffacher** (von unten).

**Freunde des Landes.**

Alle gehen nach der Tiefe, den Kommenden entgegen. Aus dem Rahm steigen Stauffacher, Stel Reding, Hans auf der Mauer, Jörg im Hofe, Konrad Sunn, Ulrich der Schmid, Jost von Weiler und noch drei andere Landleute, gleichfalls bewaffnet.

Alle (rufen).

Willkommen!

(Indem die Abrigen in der Tiefe verweilen und sich begrüßen, kommt Melchthal mit Stauffacher vorwärts.)

**Melchthal.**

O Herr Stauffacher! Ich hab' ihn  
Gesehn, der mich nicht wiedersehen konnte!  
Die Hand hab' ich gelegt auf seine Augen,  
Und glühend Rachegefühl hab' ich gezogen 990  
Aus der erloschnen Sonne seines Blicks.

**Stauffacher.**

Sprecht nicht von Rache! Nicht Geschehnes rächen,  
Gedrohtem Übel wollen wir begeben.  
— Jetzt sagt, was ihr im Unterwaldner Land  
Geschafft und für gemeine Sach' geworben, 995  
Wie die Landleute denken, wie ihr selbst  
Den Stricken des Verrats entgangen seid.

**Melchthal.**

Durch der Surennen furchtbares Gebirg,  
Auf weit verbreitet öden Eisefeldern,  
Wo nur der heisre Lämmergeier krächzt, 1000  
Gelangt' ich zu der Alpentrift, wo sich  
Aus Uri und vom Engelberg die Hirten  
Anrufend grüßen und gemeinsam weiden,  
Den Durst mir stillend mit der Gletscher Milch,  
Die in den Runsen schäumend niederquillt, 1005

Den Landmann blickst du mit Verachtung an  
Und schämst dich seiner traulichen Begrüßung.

Rudenz.

Die Ehr', die ihm gebührt, geb' ich ihm gern;  
Das Recht, das er sich nimmt, verweigr' ich ihm. 785

Attinghausen.

Das ganze Land liegt unterm schweren Jorn  
Des Königs — jedes Biedermannes Herz  
Ist kummervoll ob der tyrannischen Gewalt,  
Die wir erdulden. — dich allein rührt nicht  
Der allgemeine Schmerz — dich siehet man, 790  
Abtrünnig von den Deinen, auf der Seite

Des Landesfeindes stehen, unsrer Not  
Hohnsprechend, nach der leichten Freude jagen  
Und buhlen um die Fürstengunst, indes  
Dein Vaterland von schwerer Geißel blutet. 795

Rudenz.

Das Land ist schwer bedrängt — Warum, mein Oheim?  
Wer ist's, der es gestürzt in diese Not?

Es kostete ein einzig leichtes Wort,  
Um augenblicks des Oranges' los zu sein  
Und einen gnäd'gen Kaiser zu gewinnen. 800

Weh ihnen, die dem Volk die Augen halten,  
Daß es dem wahren Besten widerstrebt!

Um eignen Vorteils willen hindern sie,  
Daß die Waldstätte nicht zu Östreich schwören,  
Wie ringsum alle Lande doch gethan. 805

Wohl thut es ihnen, auf der Herrenbank  
Zu sitzen mit dem Edelmann — den Kaiser  
Will man zum Herrn, um keinen Herrn zu haben.

Attinghausen.

Muß ich das hören und aus deinem Munde!

## Rudenz.

Ihr habt mich aufgefodert, laßt mich enden!  
 — Welche Person ist's, Oheim, die ihr selbst  
 Hier spielt? Habt ihr nicht höhern Stolz, als hier  
 Randsamman oder Bannerherr zu sein  
 Und neben diesen Hirten zu regieren?  
 Wie? Ist's nicht eine rühmlichere Wahl,  
 Zu huldigen dem königlichen Herrn,  
 Sich an sein glänzend Lager anzuschließen,  
 Als eurer eignen Knechte Pair zu sein  
 Und zu Gericht zu sitzen mit dem Bauer?

## Attinghausen.

Ach, Uli, Uli! Ich erkenne sie,  
 Die Stimme der Verführung! Sie ergriff  
 Dein offnes Ohr, sie hat dein Herz vergiftet.

## Rudenz.

Ja, ich verberg' es nicht — in tiefer Seele  
 Schmerz mich der Spott der Fremdlinge, die uns  
 Den Bauernadel schelten — Nicht ertrag' ich's,  
 Indes die edle Jugend ringsumher  
 Sich Ehre sammelt unter Habsburgs Fahnen,  
 Auf meinem Erb' hier müßig still zu liegen  
 Und bei gemeinem Tagewerk den Lenz  
 Des Lebens zu verlieren — Anderswo  
 Geschehen Thaten, eine Welt des Ruhms  
 Bewegt sich glänzend jenseits dieser Berge —  
 Mir rosten in der Halle Helm und Schild;  
 Der Kriegsdrommete mutiges Getön,  
 Der Heroldsruf, der zum Turniere ladet,  
 Er bringt in diese Thäler nicht herein;



Nichts als den R u h r e i h n und der Herbeglocken  
Einförmiges Geläut' vernehm' ich hier.

Attinghausen.

Verblendeter, vom eiteln Glanz verführt!  
Verachte dein Geburtsland! Schäme dich 840  
Der uralten frommen Sitte deiner Väter!  
Mit heißen Thränen wirfst du dich dereinst  
Heim sehnen nach den väterlichen Bergen,  
Und dieses Herdenreihens Melodie,  
Die du in stolzem Überdruß verschmähtst, 845  
Mit Schmerzensehnsucht wird sie dich ergreifen,  
Wenn sie dir anklingt auf der fremden Erde.  
O, mächtig ist der Trieb des Vaterlands!  
Die fremde, falsche Welt ist nicht für dich;  
Dort an dem stolzen Kaiserhof bleibst du 850  
Dir ewig fremd mit deinem treuen Herzen!  
Die Welt, sie fördert andre Tugenden,  
Als du in diesen Thälern dir erworben.  
— Geh hin, verkaufe deine freie Seele,  
Nimm Land zu Lehen, werd' ein Fürstentknecht, 855  
Da du ein Selbstherr sein kannst und ein Fürst  
Auf deinem eignen Erb' und freien Boden.  
Ach, Uli! Uli! Bleibe bei den Deinen!  
Geh nicht nach Altorf — O, verlaß sie nicht,  
Die heil'ge Sache deines Vaterlands! 860  
— Ich bin der Letzte meines Stamms — mein Name  
Endet mit mir. Da hängen Helm und Schild;  
Die werden sie mir in das Grab mitgeben.  
Und muß ich denken bei dem letzten Hauch,  
Daß du mein brechend Auge nur erwartest, 865  
Um hinzugehn vor diesen neuen Lehenhof

Und meine edeln Güter, die ich frei  
Von Gott empfing, von Östreich zu empfangen!

Rudenz.

Bergebens widerstreben wir dem König,  
Die Welt gehört ihm; wollen wir allein 870

Uns eigensinnig steifen und verstocken,

Die Länderkette ihm zu unterbrechen,

Die er gewaltig rings um uns gezogen?

Sein sind die Märkte, die Gerichte, sein

Die Kaufmannsstraßen, und das Saumroß selbst, 875

Das auf dem Gotthard ziehet, muß ihm zollen.

Von seinen Ländern wie mit einem Netz

Sind wir umgarnet rings und eingeschlossen.

— Wird uns das Reich beschützen? Kann es selbst

Sich schützen gegen Östreichs wachsende Gewalt? 880

Hilft Gott uns nicht, kein Kaiser kann uns helfen.

Was ist zu geben auf der Kaiser Wort,

Wenn sie in Geld- und Kriegesnot die Städte,

Die untern Schirm des Adlers sich geflüchtet,

Verpfänden dürfen und dem Reich veräußern? 885

— Nein, Oheim! Wohlthat ist's und weise Vorsicht,

In diesen schweren Zeiten der Parteiung

Sich anzuschließen an ein mächtig Haupt.

Die Kaiserkrone geht von Stamm zu Stamm,

Die hat für treue Dienste kein Gedächtnis; 890

Doch, um den mächt'gen Erbherrn wohl verdienen,

Heißt Saaten in die Zukunft streun.

Attinghausen.

Bist du so weise?

Willst heller sehn als deine edeln Väter,

Die um der Freiheit kostbarn Edelstein



Mit Gut und Blut und Heldenkraft gestritten? 895  
 — Schiff' nach Luzern hinunter, frage dort,  
 Wie Osterreichs Herrschaft lastet auf den Ländern!  
 Sie werden kommen, unsre Schaf' und Rinder  
 Zu zählen, unsre Alpen abzumessen,  
 — Den Hochflug und das Hochgewilde bannen 900  
 In unsern freien Wäldern, ihren Schlagbaum  
 An unsre Brücken, unsre Thore setzen,  
 Mit unsrer Armut ihre Länderkäufe,  
 Mit unserm Blute ihre Kriege zahlen —  
 — Nein, wenn wir unser Blut dran setzen sollen, — 905  
 So sei's für uns — wohlfeiler kaufen wir  
 Die Freiheit als die Knechtschaft ein!

## Ruden z.

Was können wir,  
 Ein Volk der Hirten, gegen Albrechts Heere!

## Attinghausen.

Lern' dieses Volk der Hirten kennen, Knabe!  
 Ich kenn's, ich hab' es angeführt in Schlachten, 910  
 Ich hab' es fechten sehen bei Favenz-  
 Sie sollen kommen, uns ein Joch aufzwingen,  
 Das wir entschlossen sind nicht zu ertragen!  
 — O, lerne fühlen, welches Stamms du bist!  
 Wirf nicht für eiteln Glanz und Flitterschein 915  
 Die echte Perle deines Wertes hin —  
 Das Haupt zu heißen eines freien Volks,  
 Das dir aus Liebe nur sich herzlich weihet,  
 Das treulich zu dir steht in Kampf und Tod —  
 Das sei dein Stolz, des Adels rühme dich — 920  
 Die angeborenen Bande knüpfe fest,  
 Ans Vaterland, ans teure, schließ dich an,

Das halte fest mit deinem ganzen Herzen!

Hier sind die starken Wurzeln deiner Kraft;

Dort in der fremden Welt stehst du allein,

925

Ein schwankes Rohr, das jeder Sturm zerknickt.

O, komm, du hast uns lang' nicht mehr gesehn,

Versuch's mit uns nur e i n e n Tag — nur heute

Geh nicht nach Altorf — Hörst du? Heute nicht;

Den e i n e n Tag nur schenke dich den Deinen!

930

(Er fäßt seine Hand.)

Rudenz.

Ich gab mein Wort — Laßt mich — Ich bin gebunden.

Attinghausen (läßt seine Hand los, mit Ernst).

Du bist gebunden — Ja, Unglücklicher,

Du bist's, doch nicht durch Wort und Schwür,

Gebunden bist du durch der Liebe Seile!

(Rudenz wendet sich weg.)

— Verbirg dich, wie du willst. Das Fräulein ist's,

935

Bertha von Brunck, die zur Herrenburg

Dich zieht, dich fesselt an des Kaisers Dienst.

Das Ritterfräulein willst du dir erwerben

Mit deinem Abfall von dem Land — Betrügg dich nicht!

Dich anzulocken, zeigt man dir die Braut;

940

Doch deiner Unschuld ist sie nicht beschieden.

Rudenz.

Genug hab' ich gehört. Gehabt euch wohl! (Er geht ab.)

Attinghausen.

Wahnsinn'ger Jüngling, bleib! Er geht dahin!

Ich kann ihn nicht erhalten, nicht erretten —

So ist der Wolfenschießen abgefallen

945

Von seinem Land — so werden andre folgen;

Der fremde Zauber reißt die Jugend fort,

Gewaltsam strebend über unsre Berge.

— O unglücksel'ge Stunde, da das Fremde

In diese still beglückten Thäler kam,

950

Der Sitten fromme Unschuld zu zerstören!

Das Neue bringt herein mit Macht, das Alte,

Das Würd'ge scheidet, andre Zeiten kommen,

Es lebt ein andersdenkendes Geschlecht!

Was thu' ich hier? Sie sind begraben alle,

955

Mit denen ich gewalket und gelebt.

Unter der Erde schon liegt m e i n e Zeit;

Wohl dem, der mit der neuen nicht mehr braucht zu  
leben!

(Geht ab.)

## Zweite Scene.

Eine Wiese von hohen Felsen und Wald  
umgeben.

Auf den Felsen sind Steige mit Geländern, auch Leitern, von denen man  
nachher die Landleute herabsteigen sieht. Im Hintergrunde zeigt sich der  
See, über welchem anfangs ein Mondregenbogen zu sehen ist. Den Pro-  
spect schließen hohe Berge, hinter welchen noch höhere Eisgebirge ragen.  
Es ist völlig Nacht auf der Scene, nur der See und die weißen Gletscher  
leuchten im Mondlicht.

Melchthal, Baumgarten, Winkelried, Meier von Sar-  
nen, Burthardt am Büchel, Arnold von Sewa, Klaus  
von der Flüe und noch vier andere Landleute, alle bewaffnet.

Melchthal (noch hinter der Scene).

Der Bergweg öffnet sich, nur frisch mir nach!

Den Fels erkenn' ich und das Kreuzlein drauf;

960

Wir sind am Ziel, hier ist das Rüttli.

(Treten auf mit Windlichtern.)

Winkelried.

Horch!

Fewa.

Ganz leer.

Meier.

's ist noch kein Landmann da. Wir sind  
Die ersten auf dem Platz, wir Unterwaldner.

Melchthal.

Wie weit ist's in der Nacht?

Saumgarten.

Der Feuerwächter

Vom Selisberg hat eben zwei gerufen.

965

(Man hört in der Ferne läuten.)

Meier.

Still! Horch!

Am Bühel.

Das Mettenglöcklein in der Waldkapelle  
Klingt hell herüber aus dem Schwyzerland.

Von der Klüe.

Die Luft ist rein und trägt den Schall so weit.

Melchthal.

Gehn einige und zünden Reisholz an,  
Daß es loh brenne, wenn die Männer kommen.

970

(Zwei Handleute gehen.)

Fewa.

's ist eine schöne Mondennacht. Der See  
Liegt ruhig da als wie ein ebner Spiegel.

Am Bühel.

Sie haben eine leichte Fahrt.

**Winkelried** (zeigt nach dem See).

Ha, seht!

Seht dorthin! Seht ihr nichts?

**Meier.**

Was denn? — Ja, wahrlich!

Ein Regenbogen mitten in der Nacht!

975

**Melchthal.**

Es ist das Licht des Mondes, das ihn bildet.

**Don der Flüe.**

Das ist ein seltsam wunderbares Zeichen!

Es leben viele, die das nicht gesehn.

**Sewa.**

Er ist doppelt; seht, ein blässerer steht drüber.

**Baumgarten.**

Ein Nachen fährt soeben drunter weg.

980

**Melchthal.**

Das ist der Stauffacher mit seinem Rahn,

Der Biedermann läßt sich nicht lang erwarten.

(Geht mit Baumgarten nach dem Ufer.)

**Meier.**

Die Urner sind es, die am längsten säumen.

**Am Bühel.**

Sie müssen weit umgehen durchs Gebirg,

Daß sie des Landvogts Rundschaft hintergehen.

985

(Unterdessen haben die zwei Landleute in der Mitte des Plazes ein Feuer angezündet.)

**Melchthal** (am Ufer.)

Wer ist da? Gebt das Wort!

**Stauffacher** (von unten).

Freunde des Landes.

Alle gehen nach der Tiefe, den Kommenden entgegen. Aus dem Rahm steigen Stauffacher, Izel Reding, Hans auf der Mauer, Jörg im Hofe, Konrad Sunn, Ulrich der Schmid, Josef von Weiler und noch drei andere Landleute, gleichfalls bewaffnet.

Alle (rufen).

Willkommen!

(Indem die übrigen in der Tiefe verweilen und sich begrüßen, kommt Melchthal mit Stauffacher vorwärts.)

Melchthal.

O Herr Stauffacher! Ich hab' ihn  
Gesehn, der m'ich nicht wiedersehen konnte!  
Die Hand hab' ich gelegt auf seine Augen,  
Und glühend Rachegefühl hab' ich gesogen 990  
Aus der erloschnen Sonne seines Blicks.

Stauffacher.

Sprecht nicht von Rache! Nicht Geschehnes rächen,  
Gedrohtem Übel wollen wir beegnen.  
— Jetzt sagt, was ihr im Unterwaldner Land  
Geschafft und für gemeine Sach' geworden, 995  
Wie die Landleute denken, wie ihr selbst  
Den Stricken des Verrats entgangen seid.

Melchthal.

Durch der Surennen furchtbares Gebirg,  
Auf weit verbreitet öden Eisesfeldern,  
Wo nur der heisre Lämmergeier krächzt, 1000  
Gelangt' ich zu der Alpentrift, wo sich  
Aus Uri und vom Engelberg die Hirten  
Anrufend grüßen und gemeinsam weiden,  
Den Durst mir stillend mit der Gletscher Milch,  
Die in den Runfen schäumend niederquillt, 1005



In den einsamen Sennhütten lehr' ich ein,  
 Mein eigner Wirt und Gast, bis daß ich kam  
 Zu Wohnungen gesellig lebender Menschen.

— Erschollen war in diesen Thälern schon

Der Ruf des neuen Greuels, der geschehn,  
 Und fromme Ehrfurcht schaffte mir mein Unglück  
 Vor jeder Pforte, wo ich wandernd klopfte.

1010

Entrüstet fand ich diese graden Seelen

Ob dem gewaltsam neuen Regiment;

Denn so wie ihre Alpen fort und fort

1015

Dieselben Kräuter nähren, ihre Brunnen  
 Gleichförmig fließen, Wolken selbst und Winde

Den gleichen Strich unwandelbar besolgen,

So hat die alte Sitte hier vom Ahn

Zum Enkel unverändert fort bestanden.

1020

Nicht tragen sie vertwegne Neuerung

Im altgewohnten gleichen Gang des Lebens.

— Die harten Hände reichten sie mir dar,

Von den Wänden langten sie die rost'gen Schwerter,

Und aus den Augen blickte freudiges

1025

Gefühl des Muts, als ich die Namen nannte,

Die im Gebirg dem Landmann heilig sind,

Den eurigen und Walthers Fürsts — Was euch

Recht würde dünken, schwuren sie zu thun,

Euch schwuren sie bis in den Tod zu folgen.

1030

— So eilt' ich sicher unterm heil'gen Schirm

Des Gastrechts von Gehöfte zu Gehöfte —

Und als ich kam ins heimatliche Thal,

Wo mir die Bettern viel verbreitet wohnen —

Als ich den Vater fand, beraubt und blind,

1035

Auf fremdem Stroh, von der Barmherzigkeit  
 Mildthät'ger Menschen lebend —

Stauffacher.

Herr im Himmel!

Melchthal.

Da weint' ich nicht! Nicht in ohnmächt'gen Thränen  
 Gofß ich die Kraft des heißen Schmerzens aus;  
 In tiefer Brust, wie einen teuren Schatz, 1040  
 Verschloß ich ihn und dachte nur auf Thaten.  
 Ich kröch durch alle Krümmen des Gebirgs,  
 Kein Thal war so versteckt, ich späht' es aus;  
 Bis an der Gletscher eisbedeckten Fuß  
 Erwartet' ich und fand bewohnte Hütten, 1045  
 Und überall, wohin mein Fuß mich trug,  
 Fand ich den gleichen Haß der Tyrannei;  
 Denn bis an diese letzte Grenze selbst  
 Belebter Schöpfung, wo der starre Boden  
 Aufhört zu geben, raubt der Bögte Geiz — 1050  
 Die Herzen alle dieses biedern Volks  
 Erregt' ich mit dem Stachel meiner Worte,  
 Und unfer sind sie all' mit Herz und Mund.

Stauffacher.

Großes habt ihr in kurzer Frist geleistet.

Melchthal.

Ich that noch mehr. Die beiden Festen sind's, 1055  
 Roßberg und Sarnen, die der Landmann fürchtet;  
 Denn hinter ihren Felsenwällen schirmt  
 Der Feind sich leicht und schädiget das Land.  
 Mit eignen Augen wolst' ich es erkunden;  
 Ich war zu Sarnen und besah die Burg. 1060

Stauffacher.

Ihr wagtet euch bis in des Tigers Höhle?



## Melchthal.

Ich war verkleidet dort in Pilgerstracht,  
 Ich sah den Landvogt an der Tafel schmelgen —  
 Urteilt, ob ich mein Herz bezwingen kann;  
 Ich sah den Feind, und ich erschlug ihn nicht.

1063

## Stauffacher.

Fürwahr, das Glück war eurer Kühnheit hold.

(Unterdessen sind die anderen Landleute vorwärts gekommen und nähern sich beiden.)

Doch jezo sagt mir, wer die Freunde sind  
 Und die gerechten Männer, die euch folgten?  
 Macht mich bekannt mit ihnen, daß wir uns  
 Zutraulich nahen und die Herzen öffnen.

1070

## Mei'r.

Wer kennt euch nicht, Herr, in den drei Landen?  
 Ich bin der Mei'r von Sarnen; dies hier ist  
 Mein Schwestersohn, der Struth von Winkelried.

## Stauffacher.

Ihr nennt mir keinen unbekannt'n Namen.  
 Ein Winkelried war's, der den Drachen schlug  
 Im Sumpf bei Weiler und sein Leben ließ  
 In diesem Strauß.

1075

## Winkelried.

Das war mein Ahn, Herr Werner.

## Melchthal (zeigt auf zwei Landleute).

Die wohnen hinterm Wald, sind Klosterleute  
 Vom Engelberg — Ihr werdet sie drum nicht  
 Berachten, weil sie e i g n e Leute sind  
 Und nicht, wie wir, frei sitzen auf dem Erbe —  
 Sie lieben's Land, sind sonst auch wohl berufen,

1080

**Stauffacher** (zu den beiden).

Gebt mir die Hand. Es preise sich, wer keinem  
(Mit seinem Leibe pflichtig ist auf Erden; )  
Doch Redlichkeit gedeiht in jedem Stande.

1085

**Konrad Hunn.**

Das ist Herr Keding, unser Altlandammann.

**Meier.**

Ich kenn' ihn wohl. Er ist mein Widerpart,  
Der um ein altes Erbstück mit mir rechtet.  
— Herr Keding, wir sind Feinde vor Gericht;  
Hier sind wir einig. (Schüttelt ihm die Hand.)

**Stauffacher.**

Das ist brav gesprochen.

1090

**Winkelried.**

Hört ihr? Sie kommen. Hört das Horn von Uri!

(Rechts und links sieht man bewaffnete Männer mit Windlichtern die Felsen herabsteigen.)

**Auf der Mauer.**

Seht! Steigt nicht selbst der fromme Diener Gottes,  
Der würd'ge Pfarrer, mit herab? Nicht scheut er  
Des Weges Mühen und das Graun der Nacht,  
Ein treuer Hirte für das Volk zu sorgen.

1095

**Baumgarten.**

Der Sigrift folgt ihm und Herr Walther Fürst;  
Doch nicht den Tell erblick' ich in der Menge.

Walther Fürst, Rösselmann, der Pfarrer, Petermann, der  
Sigrift, Ruoni, der Hirt, Werni, der Jäger, Ruodi, der Fischer,  
und noch fünf andere Bandleute. Alle zusammen, dreiunddreißig an  
der Zahl, treten vorwärts und stellen sich um das Feuer.

**Walther Fürst.**

So müssen wir auf unserm eignen Erb'  
Und väterlichen Boden uns verstopfen



Zusammen schleichen, wie die Mörder thun, 1100  
 Und bei der Nacht, die ihren schwarzen Mantel  
 Nur dem Verbrechen und der sonnenscheuen  
 Verschwörung leihet, unser gutes Recht  
 Uns holen, das doch lauter ist und klar  
 Gleichwie der glanzvoll offne Schoß des Tages. 1105

## Melchthal.

Laßt's gut sein! Was die dunkle Nacht gesponnen,  
 Soll frei und fröhlich an das Licht der Sonnen.

## Köffelmann.

Hört, was mir Gott ins Herz giebt, Eidgenossen!  
 Wir stehen hier statt einer Landsgemeinde  
 Und können gelten für ein ganzes Volk. 1110  
 So laßt uns tagen nach den alten Bräuchen  
 Des Lands, wie wir's in ruhigen Zeiten pflegen;  
 Was ungeseglich ist in der Versammlung,  
 Entschuldige die Not der Zeit. Doch Gott  
 Ist überall, wo man das Recht verwaltet, 1115  
 Und unter seinem Himmel stehen wir.

## Stauffacher.

Wohl, laßt uns tagen nach der alten Sitte!  
 Ist es gleich Nacht, so leuchtet unser Recht.

## Melchthal.

Ist gleich die Zahl nicht voll, das Herz ist hier  
 Des ganzen Volks, die Besten sind zugegen. 1120

## Konrad Hunn.

Sind auch die alten Bücher nicht zur Hand,  
 Sie sind in unsre Herzen eingeschrieben.

Röffelmann.

Wohlan, so sei der Ring sogleich gebildet!  
Man pflanze auf die Schwerter der Gewalt!

**K** Auf der Mauer.

Der Landesammann nehme seinen Platz,  
Und seine Weibel stehen ihm zur Seite!

1125

Figrist.

Es sind der Völker dreie. Welchem nun  
Gebührt's, das Haupt zu geben der Gemeinde?

Meier.

Um diese Ehr' mag Schwyz mit Uri streiten;  
Wir Unterwaldner stehen frei zurück.

1130

Melchthal.

Wir stehn zurück; wir sind die Flehenden,  
Die Hilfe heischen von den mächt'gen Freunden.

Stauffacher.

So nehme Uri denn das Schwert; sein Banner  
Zieht bei den Römerzügen uns voran.

Walther Fürst.

Des Schwertes Ehre werde Schwyz zu teil;  
Denn seines Stammes rühmen wir uns alle.

1135

Röffelmann.

Den edeln Wettstreit laßt mich freundlich schlichten:  
Schwyz soll im Rat, Uri im Felde führen.

Walther Fürst (reicht dem Stauffacher die Schwerter).

So nehmt!

Stauffacher.

Nicht mir, dem Alter sei die Ehre!

Im Hofe.

Die meisten Jahre zählt Ulrich der Schmid.

1140



## Auf der Mauer.

Der Mann ist wacker, doch nicht freien Stands;  
Kein eigner Mann kann Richter sein in Schwyz.

## Stauffacher.

Steht nicht Herr Reding hier, der Altlandammann?  
Was suchen wir noch einen Würdigern?

## Walther Fürst.

Er sei der Ammann und des Tages Haupt! 1145  
Wer dazu stimmt, erhebe seine Hände!

(Alle heben die rechte Hand auf.)

## Reding (tritt in die Mitte).

Ich kann die Hand nicht auf die Bücher legen,  
So schwör' ich droben bei den ew'gen Sternen,  
Daß ich mich nimmer will vom Recht entfernen.

(Man richtet die zwei Schwerter vor ihm auf, der Ring bildet sich um ihn her, Schwyz hält die Mitte, rechts stellt sich Uri und links Unterwalden. Er sieht auf sein Schwertschwert gefügt.)

Was ist's, das die drei Völker des Gebirgs 1150  
Hier an des Sees unwirtlichem Gestade  
Zusammenführte in der Geisterstunde?  
Was soll der Inhalt sein des neuen Bunds,  
Den wir hier unterm Sternenhimmel stiften?

## Stauffacher (tritt in den Ring).

Wir stiften keinen neuen Bund; es ist 1155  
Ein uralte Bündnis nur von Väter Zeit,  
Das wir erneuern! Wisset, Eidgenossen!  
Ob uns der See, ob uns die Berge scheiden  
Und jedes Volk sich für sich selbst regiert,  
So sind wir eines Stammes doch und Bluts, 1160  
Und eine Heimat ist's, aus der wir zogen.

## Winkelried.

So ist es wahr, wie's in den Liedern lautet,  
 Daß wir von fernher in das Land gewallt?  
 O, theilt's uns mit, was euch davon bekannt,  
 Daß sich der neue Bund am alten stärke!

1165

## Stauffacher.

Hört, was die alten Hirten sich erzählen.  
 — Es war ein großes Volk, hinten im Lande  
 Nach Mitternacht, das litt von schwerer Teurung.  
 In dieser Not beschloß die Landsgemeinde,  
 Daß je der zehnte Bürger nach dem Los  
 Der Väter Land verlasse — Das geschah!  
 Und zogen aus, wehklagend, Männer und Weiber,  
 Ein großer Heerzug, nach der Mittagsonne,  
 Mit dem Schwert sich schlagend durch das deutsche Land,  
 Bis an das Hochland dieser Waldgebirge.  
 Und eher nicht ermüdete der Zug,  
 Bis daß sie kamen in das wilde Thal,  
 Wo jetzt die Muotta zwischen Wiesen rinnt —  
 Nicht Menschenspuren waren hier zu sehen,  
 Nur eine Hütte stand am Ufer einsam,  
 Da saß ein Mann und wartete der Fähre —  
 Doch heftig wogete der See und war  
 Nicht fahrbar; da besahen sie das Land  
 Sich näher und gewahrten schöne Fülle  
 Des Holzes und entdeckten gute Brunnen  
 Und meinten, sich im lieben Vaterland  
 Zu finden — Da beschlossen sie zu bleiben,  
 Erbaueten den alten Flecken S c h w y z  
 Und hatten manchen sauren Tag, den Wald  
 Mit weitverschlungnen Wurzeln auszuroden —

1170

1175

1180

1185

1190





Tell.

Wer frisch umherspäht mit gesunden Sinnen,  
Auf Gott vertraut und die gelenkte Kraft,  
Der ringt sich leicht aus jeder Fahr und Not;  
Den schreckt der Berg nicht, der darauf geboren.

1510

(Er hat seine Arbeit vollendet, legt das Gerät hinweg.)

(Setzt, mein' ich, hält das Thor auf Fahr und Tag.)  
(Die Art im Haus erspart den Zimmermann.)

(Nimmt den Out.)

Hedwig.

Wo gehst du hin?

Tell.

Nach Altorf, zu dem Vater.

1515

Hedwig.

Sinnst du auch nichts Gefährliches? Gesteh mir's!

Tell.

Wie kommst du darauf, Frau?

Hedwig.

Es spinnt sich etwas

Gegen die Bögte — Auf dem Rütli ward  
Getagt, ich weiß, und du bist auch im Bunde.

Tell.

Ich war nicht mit dabei — doch werd' ich mich  
Dem Lande nicht entziehen, wenn es ruft.

1520

Hedwig.

Sie werden dich hinstellen, wo Gefahr ist;  
Das Schwerste wird dein Anteil sein, wie immer.

Tell.

(Ein jeder wird besteuert nach Vermögen.)

Hedwig.

Den Unterwaldner hast du auch im Sturme  
Über den See geschafft — Ein Wunder war's,

1525

Daß ihr entkommen — Dachtest du denn gar nicht  
An Kind und Weib?

Tell.

Lieb Weib, ich dacht' an euch;  
Drum rettet' ich den Vater seinen Kindern.

Hedwig.

Zu schiffen in dem wüt'gen See! Das heißt  
Nicht Gott vertrauen! Das heißt Gott versuchen!

1530

Tell.

Wer gar zu viel bedenkt, wird wenig leisten.

Hedwig.

Ja, du bist gut und hilfreich, dienest allen,  
Und wenn du selbst in Not kommst, hilfst dir keiner.

Tell.

Verhüt' es Gott, daß ich nicht Hilfe brauche!

1535

(Er nimmt die Armbrust und Pfeile.)

Hedwig.

Was willst du mit der Armbrust? Laß sie hier!

Tell.

Mir fehlt der Arm, wenn mir die Waffe fehlt.

(Die Knaben kommen zurück.)

Walther.

Vater, wo gehst du hin?

Tell.

Nach Altorf, Knabe

Zum Chni — Willst du mit?

Walther.

Ja, freilich will ich.

Hedwig.

Der Landvogt ist jetzt dort. Bleib weg von Altorf.

1540

Tell.

Er geht, noch heute.

Hedwig.

Drum laß ihn erst fort sein!  
Gemahn' ihn nicht an dich, du weißt, er grollt uns.

Tell.

Mir soll sein böser Wille nicht viel schaden,  
Ich thue recht und scheue keinen Feind.

Hedwig.

Die recht thun, eben die haßt er am meisten. 1545

Tell.

Weil er nicht an sie kommen kann — M i c h wird  
Der Ritter wohl in Frieden lassen, mein' ich.

Hedwig.

So, weißt du das?

Tell.

Es ist nicht lange her,  
Da ging ich jagen durch die wilden Gründe  
Des Schächenthals auf menschenleerer Spur, 1550  
Und da ich einsam einen Felsensteig  
Verfolgte, wo nicht auszuweichen war,  
Denn über mir hing schroff die Felswand her,  
Und unten rauschte fürchterlich der Schächten,  
(Die Knaben drängen sich rechts und links an ihn und sehen mit gespannter  
Reugier an ihm hinauf.)

Da kam der Landvogt gegen mich daher, 1555  
Er ganz allein mit mir, der auch allein war,  
Bloß Mensch zu Mensch, und neben uns der Abgrund.

Und als der Herr mein ansichtig ward  
Und mich erkannte, den er kurz zuvor  
Um kleiner Ursach' willen schwer gebüßt, 1560

Und sah mich mit dem stattlichen Gewehr  
Daher geschritten kommen, da verblaßt' er,  
Die Knie' versagten ihm, ich sah es kommen,

Daß er jetzt an die Felswand würde sinken.  
 — Da jammerte mich sein, ich trat zu ihm 1565  
 Bescheidenlich und sprach: Ich bin's, Herr Landvogt.  
 Er aber konnte keinen armen Laut  
 Aus seinem Munde geben — Mit der Hand nur  
 Winkt' er mir schweigend, meines Wegs zu gehn;  
 Da ging ich fort und sandt' ihm sein Gefolge. 1570

Hedwig.

Er hat vor dir gezittert — Wehe dir!  
 Daß du ihn schwach gesehn, vergiebt er nie.

Tell.

Drum meid' ich ihn, und er wird in ich nicht suchen.

Hedwig.

Bleib heute nur dort weg. Geh lieber jagen!

Tell.

Was fällt dir ein?

Hedwig.

Mich ängstigt's. Bleibe weg! 1575

Tell.

Wie kannst du dich so ohne Ursach' quälen?

Hedwig.

Weil's keine Ursach' hat — Tell, bleibe hier!

Tell.

Ich hab's versprochen, liebes Weib, zu kommen.

Hedwig.

Mußt du, so geh — nur lasse mir den Knaben!

Walther.

Nein, Mütterchen. Ich gehe mit dem Vater. 1580

Hedwig.

Wälkt, verlassen willst du deine Mutter?

Walther.

Ich bring' dir auch was Hübsches mit vom Ehn.

(Geht mit dem Vater.)

Wilhelm.

Mutter, ich bleibe bei dir!

Hedwig (umarmt ihn.)

Ja, du bist

Mein liebes Kind, du bleibst mir noch allein!

(Sie geht an das Hofthor und folgt den Abgehenden lange mit den Augen.)

### Zweite Scene.

Eine eingeschlossene wilde Waldgegend,  
Staubbäche stürzen von den Felsen.

Bertha im Jagdkleid. Gleich darauf Rudenz.

Bertha.

Er folgt mir. Endlich kann ich mich erklären.

1585

Rudenz (tritt rasch ein).

Fräulein, jetzt endlich find' ich euch allein,  
Abgründe schließen ringsumher uns ein;  
In dieser Wildnis fürcht' ich keinen Zeugen,  
Vom Herzen wälz' ich dieses lange Schweigen —

Bertha.

Seid ihr gewiß, daß uns die Jagd nicht folgt?

1590

Rudenz.

Die Jagd ist dort hinaus — Jetzt oder nie!  
Ich muß den teuren Augenblick ergreifen —  
Entschieden sehen muß ich mein Geschick,  
Und sollt' es mich auf ewig von euch scheiden.

— O, waffnet eure gü'tgen Blicke nicht  
 Mit dieser finstern Strenge — Wer bin ich,  
 1595 Daß ich den kühnen Wunsch zu euch erhebe?  
 Mich hat der Ruhm noch nicht genannt; ich darf  
 Mich in die Reih' nicht stellen mit den Rittersn,  
 Die siegberühmt und glänzend euch umwerben.  
 1600 Nichts hab' ich als mein Herz voll Treu und Liebe —

Bertha (ernst und streng).

Dürft ihr von Liebe reden und von Treue,  
 Der treulos wird an seinen nächsten Pflichten?

(Rudenz tritt zurück.)

Der Sklave Osterreichs, der sich dem Fremdling  
 1605 Verkauft, dem Unterdrücker seines Volks?

Rudenz.

Von euch, mein Fräulein, hör' ich diesen Vorwurf?  
 Wen such' ich denn als euch auf jener Seite?

Bertha.

Mich denkt ihr auf der Seite des Verrats  
 Zu finden? Eher wollt' ich meine Hand  
 Dem Geßler selbst, dem Unterdrücker, schenken,  
 1610 Als dem naturbergeßnen Sohn der Schweiz,  
 (Der sich zu seinem Werkzeug machen kann!)

Rudenz.

O Gott, was muß ich hören!

Bertha.

Wie? Was liegt

Dem guten Menschen näher als die Seinen?  
 1615 Giebt's schönre Pflichten für ein edles Herz,  
 Als ein Verteidiger der Unschuld sein,  
 Das Recht des Unterdrückten zu beschirmen?  
 — Die Seele blutet mir um euer Volk;

Ich leide mit ihm, denn ich muß es lieben,  
 Das so bescheiden ist und doch voll Kraft; 1620  
 Es zieht mein ganzes Herz mich zu ihm hin,  
 Mit jedem Tage lern' ich's mehr verehren.

— Ihr aber, den Natur und Ritterpflicht  
 Ihm zum geborenen Beschützer gaben,  
 Und der's verläßt, der treulos übertritt 1625  
 Zum Feind und Ketten schmiedet seinem Land,  
 Ihr seid's, der mich verlegt und kränkt; ich muß  
 Mein Herz bezwingen, daß ich euch nicht hasse.

Rudenz.

Will ich denn nicht das Beste meines Volks?  
 Ihm unter Östreichs mächt'gem Scepter nicht 1630  
 Den Frieden —

Bertha.

Knechtschaft wollt ihr ihm bereiten!

Die Freiheit wollt ihr aus dem letzten Schloß,  
 Das ihr noch auf der Erde blieb, verjagen.  
 Das Volk versteht sich besser auf sein Glück;  
 Kein Schein verführt sein sicheres Gefühl. 1635  
 Euch haben sie das Netz ums Haupt geworfen —

Rudenz.

Bertha! Ihr haßt mich, ihr verachtet mich!

Bertha.

Thät' ich's, mir wäre besser — Aber den  
 Verachtet sehen und verachtungswert,  
 Den man gern lieben möchte —

Rudenz.

Bertha! Bertha! 1640

Ihr zeigt mir das höchste Himmelsglück  
 Und stürzt mich tief in einem Augenblick.

Gertha.

Nein, nein, das Edle ist nicht ganz erstickt  
In euch! Es schlummert nur, ich will es wecken;  
Ihr müßt Gewalt ausüben an euch selbst, 1645  
Die angestammte Tugend zu ertönen;  
Doch, wohl euch, sie ist mächtiger als ihr,  
Und trotz euch selber seid ihr gut und edel!

Rudenz.

Ihr glaubt an mich! O Gertha, alles läßt  
Mich eure Liebe fein und werden!

Gertha.

Seid,

1650

Wozu die herrliche Natur euch machte!  
Erfüllt den Platz, wohin sie euch gestellt,  
Zu eurem Volke steht und eurem Lande  
Und kämpft für euer heilig Recht!

Rudenz.

Weh mir!

Wie kann ich euch erringen, euch besitzen,  
Wenn ich der Macht des Kaisers widerstrebe? 1655  
Ist's der Verwandten mächt'ger Wille nicht,  
Der über eure Hand tyrannisch waltet?

Gertha.

In den Waldstätten liegen meine Güter,  
Und ist der Schweizer frei, so bin auch ich's. 1660

Rudenz.

Bertha, welch einen Blick thut ihr mir auf!

Gertha.

Hofft nicht, durch Östreichs Gunst mich zu erringen;  
Nach meinem Erbe strecken sie die Hand,





Das will man mit dem großen Erb' vereinen.  
 Dieselbe Ländergier, die eure Freiheit  
 Verschlingen will, sie drohet auch der meinen!

1665

— O Freund, zum Opfer bin ich ausersehn,  
 Vielleicht, um einen Günstling zu belohnen —  
 Dort, wo die Falschheit und die Ränke wohnen,  
 Hin an den Kaiserhof will man mich ziehn,  
 Dort harren mein verhaßter Ehe Ketten;  
 Die Liebe nur — die eure kann mich retten!

1670

### Rudenz.

Ihr könntet euch entschließen, hier zu leben,  
 In meinem Vaterlande mein zu sein?  
 O Bertha, all mein Sehnen in das Weite,  
 Was war es, als ein Streben nur nach euch?  
 Euch sucht' ich einzig auf dem Weg des Ruhms,  
 Und all mein Ehrgeiz war nur meine Liebe.  
 Könnt ihr mit mir euch in dies stille Thal  
 Einschließen und der Erde Glanz entfagen —  
 O, dann ist meines Strebens Ziel gefunden;  
 Dann mag der Strom der wildbewegten Welt  
 Uns sichere Ufer dieser Berge schlagen —  
 Kein flüchtiges Verlangen hab' ich mehr  
 Hinauszufenden in des Lebens Weiten —  
 Dann mögen diese Felsen um uns her  
 Die undurchbringlich feste Mauer breiten,  
 Und dies verschloßne sel'ge Thal allein  
 Zum Himmel offen und gelichtet sein!

1675

1680

1685

### Bertha.

Jetzt bist du ganz, wie dich mein ahnend Herz  
 Geträumt, mich hat mein Glaube nicht betrogen!

1690

## Rudenz.

Fahr' hin, du eitler Wahn, der mich behört!  
 Ich soll das Glück in meiner Heimat finden.  
 Hier, wo der Knabe fröhlich aufgeblüht,  
 Wo tausend Freudespüren mich umgeben, 1695  
 Wo alle Quellen mir und Bäume leben,  
 Im Vaterland willst du die Meine werden!  
 Ach, wohl hab' ich es stets geliebt! Ich fühl's,  
 Es fehlte mir zu jedem Glück der Erden.

## Gertha.

Wo wär' die sel'ge Insel aufzufinden, 1700  
 Wenn sie nicht hier ist in der Unschuld Land?  
 Hier, wo die alte Treue heimisch wohnt,  
 Wo sich die Falschheit noch nicht hingefunden,  
 Da trübt kein Neid die Quelle unsers Glücks,  
 Und ewig hell entfliehen uns die Stunden. 1705  
 — Da seh' ich dich im echten Männerwert,  
 (Den Ersten von den Freien und den Gleichen,)  
 Mit keiner, freier Hulbigung verehrt,  
 Groß, wie ein König wirft in seinen Reichen.

## Rudenz.

Da seh' ich dich, die Krone aller Frauen, 1710  
 In weiblich reizender Geschäftigkeit,  
 In meinem Haus den Himmel mir erbauen  
 Und, wie der Frühling seine Blumen streut,  
 Mit schöner Anmut mir das Leben schmücken  
 Und alles rings beleben und beglücken! 1715

## Gertha.

Sieh, teurer Freund, warum ich trauerte,  
 Als ich dies höchste Lebensglück dich selbst  
 Zerstören sah — Weh mir! Wie stünd's u:n mich,



Wenn ich dem stolzen Ritter müßte folgen,  
Dem Landbedrücket, auf sein finstres Schloß!  
— Hier ist kein Schloß. Mich scheiden keine Mauern  
Von einem Volk, das ich beglücken kann!

1720

Rudenz.

Doch, wie mich retten, — wie die Schlinge lösen  
Die ich mir thöricht selbst ums Haupt gelegt?

Gertha.

Zerreiße sie mit männlichem Entschluß!  
(Was auch draus werde) — steh zu deinem Volk!  
Es ist dein angeborener Platz. (Jagdhörner in der Ferne.)

1725

Die Jagd

Kommt näher — Fort, wir müssen scheiden — Kämpfe  
Fürs Vaterland, du kämpfst für deine Liebe!  
Es ist ein Feind, vor dem wir alle zittern,  
Und eine Freiheit macht uns alle frei! (Gehen ab.)

1730

## Dritte Scene.

Wiese bei Altorf. Im Vordergrund Bäume,  
in der Tiefe der Hut auf einer Stange. Der  
Prospekt wird begrenzt durch den Bannberg,  
über welchem ein Schneegebirg emporragt.

Frieszhardt und Reuthold halten Wache.

Frieszhardt.

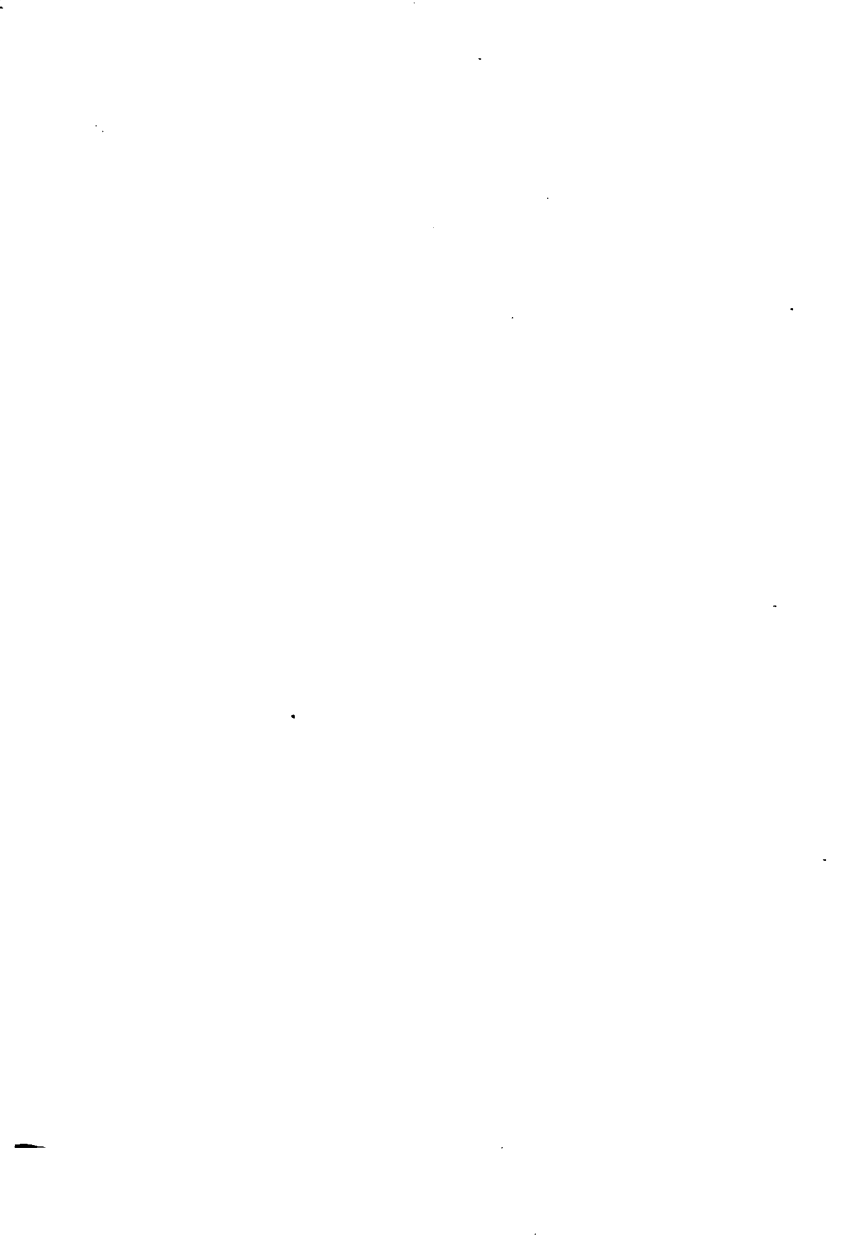
Wir passen auf umsonst. Es will sich niemand  
Heran begeben und dem Hut sein' Reverenz  
Erzeigen. 's war doch sonst wie Jahrmarkt hier;  
Jetzt ist der ganze Anger wie verödet,  
Seitdem der Popanz auf der Stange hängt.

1735



TELL STATUE AT ALTORF.

(To face p. 84.)



## Leuthold.

Nur schlecht Gefindel läßt sich sehn und schwingt  
 Uns zum Verdrieße die zerlumpten Mützen.  
 Was rechte Leute sind, die machen lieber  
 Den langen Umweg um den halben Flecken,  
 Eh' sie den Rücken beugten vor dem Hut. 1740

## Frießhardt.

Sie müssen über diesen Platz, wenn sie  
 Vom Rathaus kommen um die Mittagsstunde.  
 Da meint' ich schon, 'nen guten Fang zu thun,  
 Denn keiner dachte dran, den Hut zu grüßen. 1745  
 Da sieht's der Pfaff, der Kößelmann — kam juist  
 Von einem Kranken her — und stellt' sich hin  
 Mit dem Hochwürdigen, grad' vor die Stange —  
 Der Sgrist mußte mit dem Glöcklein schellen;  
 Da fielen all' aufs Knie, ich selber mit, 1750  
 Und grüßten die Monst'ranz, doch nicht den Hut.

## Leuthold.

Höre, Gesell, es fängt mir an zu deuchten,  
 Wir stehen hier am Prängek vor dem Hut;  
 's ist doch ein Schimpf für einen Reitersmann,  
 Schildwach' zu stehn vor einem leeren Hut — 1755  
 Und jeder rechte Kerl muß uns verachten.  
 — Die Reverenzz zu machen einem Hut,  
 Es ist doch, traun, ein närrischer Befehl!

## Frießhardt.

Warum nicht einem leeren, hohlen Hut?  
 Bückst du dich doch vor manchem hohlen Schädel. 1760

(Silddegard, Mechthild und Elisabeth treten auf mit Kindern und stellen sich um die Stange.)

**Leuthold.**

Und du bist auch so ein dienstfert'ger Schurke  
Und brächtest wackre Leute gern ins Unglück.  
Mag, wer da will, am Hut vorübergehn,  
Ich drück' die Augen zu und seh' nicht hin.

**Mechthild.**

Da hängt der Landvogt — habt Respekt, ihr Buben! 1765

**Elsbeth.**

Wollt's Gott, er ging' und ließ' uns seinen Hut;  
Es sollte drum nicht schlechter stehn ums Land!

**Friesshardt** (verschneut sie).

Wollt ihr vom Platz! Verwünschtes Volk der Weiber!  
Wer fragt nach euch? Schickt eure Männer her,  
Wenn sie der Mut sticht, dem Befehl zu trogen. 1770

(Weiber gehen.)

(Tell mit der Armbrust tritt auf, den Knaben an der Hand führend.  
Sie gehen an dem Hut vorbei gegen die vordere Scene, ohne darauf zu achten.)

**Walther** (zeigt nach dem Bannberg).

Vater, ist's wahr, daß auf dem Berge dort  
Die Bäume bluten, wenn man einen Streich  
Drauf führte mit der Art —

**Tell.**

Wer sagt das, Knabe?

**Walther.**

Der Meister Hirt erzählt's — Die Bäume seien  
Gebannt, sagt er, und wer sie schädige,  
Dem wachse seine Hand heraus zum Grabe. 1775

Cell.

Die Bäume sind gebannt, das ist die Wahrheit.  
— Siehst du die Firnen dort, die weißen Hörner,  
Die hoch bis in den Himmel sich verlieren?

Walther.

Das sind die Gletscher, die des Nachts so donnern 1780  
Und uns die Schlaglawinen niederfenden.

Cell.

So ist's, und die Lawinen hätten längst  
Den Flecken Altorf unter ihrer Last  
Verschüttet, wenn der Wald dort oben nicht  
Als eine Landwehr sich dagegen stellte. 1785

Walther (nach einigem Besinnen).

Giebt's Länder, Vater, wo nicht Berge sind?

Cell.

Wenn man hinuntersteigt von unsern Höhen  
Und immer tiefer steigt, den Strömen nach,  
Gelangt man in ein großes, ebnes Land,  
Wo die Waldwasser nicht mehr brausend schäumen, 1790  
Die Flüsse ruhig und gemächlich ziehn;  
Da sieht man frei nach allen Himmelsträumen,  
Das Korn wächst dort in langen, schönen Auen,  
Und wie ein Garten ist das Land zu schauen.

Walther.

Ei, Vater, warum steigen wir denn nicht 1795  
Geschwind hinab in dieses schöne Land,  
Statt daß wir uns hier ängstigen und plagen?

Cell.

Das Land ist schön und gütig, wie der Himmel;  
Doch die's bebauen, sie genießen nicht  
Den Segen, den sie pflanzen.



Walther.

Wohnen sie  
Nicht frei, wie du, auf ihrem eignen Erbe? 1800

Tell.

Das Feld gehört dem Bischof und dem König.

Walther.

So dürfen sie doch frei in Wäldern jagen?

Tell.

Dem Herrn gehört das Wild und das Gefieder.

Walther.

Sie dürfen doch frei fischen in dem Strom? 1805

Tell.

Der Strom, das Meer, das Salz gehört dem König.

Walther.

Wer ist der König denn, den alle fürchten?

Tell.

Es ist der e i n e, der sie schützt und nährt.

Walther.

Sie können sich nicht mutig selbst beschützen?

Tell.

Dort darf der Nachbar nicht dem Nachbar trauen. 1810

Walther.

Vater, es wird mir eng im weiten Land;  
Da wohn' ich lieber unter den Lawinen.

Tell.

Ja, wohl ist's besser, Kind, die Gletscherberge  
Im Rücken haben als die bösen Menschen.

(Sie wollen vorübergehen.)

Walther.

Ei, Vater, sieh den Hut dort auf der Stange! 1815

Cell.

Was kimmert uns der Hut? Komm, laß uns gehen!

(Indem er abgehen will, tritt ihm Frießhardt mit vorgehaltener Pite entgegen.)

Frießhardt.

In des Kaisers Namen! Haltet an und steht!

Cell (greift in die Pite).

Was wollt ihr? Warum haltet ihr mich auf?

Frießhardt.

Ihr habt's Mandat verlegt; ihr müßt uns folgen.

Leuthold.

Ihr habt dem Hut nicht Reverenz bewiesen. 1820

Cell.

Freund, laß mich gehen!

Frießhardt.

Fort, fort ins Gefängnis!

Walther.

Den Vater ins Gefängnis! Hilfe! Hilfe!

(In die Scene rufend.)

Herbei, ihr Männer, gute Leute, helft!

Gewalt! Gewalt! Sie führen ihn gefangen.

(Rößelmann, der Pfarrer, und Petermann, der Sigrift, kommen herbei, mit drei anderen Männern.)

Sigrift.

Was giebt's?

Rößelmann.

Was legst du Hand an diesen Mann? 1825

Friesghardt.

Er ist ein Feind des Kaisers, ein Verräter!

Tell (faßt ihn heftig).

Ein Verräter, ich!

Köffelmann.

Du irrst dich, Freund. Das ist  
Der Tell, ein Ehrenmann und guter Bürger.

Walther (erblickt Walther Fürsten und eilt ihm entgegen).  
Großvater, hilf! Gewalt geschieht dem Vater.

Friesghardt.

Ins Gefängnis, fort!

Walther Fürst (herbeieilend).

Ich leiste Bürgschaft, haltet!

1830

— Um Gottes willen, Tell, was ist geschehen?

(Melchthal und Stauffacher kommen.)

Friesghardt.

Des Landvogts oberherrliche Gewalt  
Verachtet er und will sie nicht erkennen.

Stauffacher.

Das hätt' der Tell gethan?

Melchthal.

Das lügst du, Bube!

Leuthold.

Er hat dem Gut nicht Reverenz bewiesen.

1835

Walther Fürst.

Und darum soll er ins Gefängnis? Freund,  
Nimm meine Bürgschaft an und laß ihn ledig!

Friesghardt.

Bürg' du für dich und deinen eignen Leib!  
Wir thun, was unsers Amtes — Fort mit ihm!

Melchthal (zu den Landleuten).

Nein, das ist schreiende Gewalt! Ertragen wir's,  
Daß man ihn fortführt, frech, vor unsern Augen? 1840

Sigrisf.

Wir sind die Stärkern. Freunde, duldet's nicht!  
Wir haben einen Rücken an den andern.

Frießhardt.

Wer widersezt sich dem Befehl des Vogts?

Noch drei Landleute (herbeieilend).

Wir helfen euch. Was giebt's? Schlagt sie zu Boden! 1845  
(Gildegard, Mechthild und Elisabeth kommen zurück.)

Cell.

Ich helfe mir schon selbst. Geht, gute Leute!  
Meint ihr, wenn ich die Kraft gebrauchen wollte,  
Ich würde mich vor ihren Spießern fürchten?

Melchthal (zu Frießhardt).

Wag's, ihn aus unsrer Mitte wegzuführen!

Walther Fürst und Stauffacher.

Gelassen! Ruhig!

Frießhardt (schreit).

Aufruhr und Empörung!

1850

(Man hört Jagdhörner.)

Weiber.

Da kommt der Landvogt!

Frießhardt (erhebt die Stimme).

Neuterei! Empörung!

Stauffacher.

Schrei, bis du verwest, Schurke!

Rösselmann und Melchthal.

Willst du schweigen?

Frießhardt (ruft noch lauter).

Zu Hilf, zu Hilf den Dienern des Gesetzes!

Walther Fürst.

Da ist der Vogt! Weh uns, was wird das werden!

(Gessler zu Pferd, den Falken auf der Faust, Rudolf der Harras, Bertha und Rudenz, ein großes Gefolge von bewaffneten Knechten, welche einen Kreis von Bänken um die ganze Scene schließen.)

Rudolf der Harras.

Platz, Platz dem Landvogt!

Gessler.

Treibt sie auseinander! 1855

Was läuft das Volk zusammen? Wer ruft Hilfe?

(Allgemeine Stille.)

Wer war's? Ich will es wissen. (Zu Frießhardt.)

Du tritt vor!

Wer bist du, und was hältst du diesen Mann?

(Er giebt den Falken einem Diener.)

Frießhardt.

Gestrenger Herr, ich bin dein Waffenknecht

Und wohlbestellter Wächter bei dem Hut. 1860

Diesen Mann ergriff ich über frischer That,

Wie er dem Hut den Ehrengruß versagte.

Verhaften wollt' ich ihn, wie du befehlt,

Und mit Gewalt will ihn das Volk entreißen.

Gessler (nach einer Pause).

Verachtest du so deinen Kaiser, Tell,

Und mich, der hier an seiner Statt gebietet, 1865

Daß du die Ehr' versagst dem Hut, den ich

Zur Prüfung des Gehorsams aufgehangen?

Dein böses Trachten hast du mir verraten.

Tell.

Verzeiht mir, lieber Herr! Aus Unbedacht,  
Nicht aus Verächtung eurer ist's geschehn.  
Wär' ich besonnen, hieß' ich nicht der Tell,  
Ich bitt' um Gnad', es soll nicht mehr begegnen.

Geflex (nach einigem Stillschweigen).

Du bist ein Meister auf der Armbrust, Tell,  
Man sagt, du nimmst es auf mit jedem Schützen?

Walther Tell.

Und das muß wahr sein, Herr, 'nen Apfel schießt  
Der Vater dir vom Baum auf hundert Schritte.

Geflex.

Ist das dein Knabe, Tell?

Tell.

Ja, lieber Herr.

Geflex.

Hast du der Kinder mehr?

Tell.

Zwei Knaben, Herr.

Geflex

Und welcher ist's, den du am meisten liebst?

Tell.

Herr, beide sind sie mir gleich liebe Kinder.

Geflex.

Nun, Tell! weil du den Apfel triffst vom Baume  
Auf hundert Schritt, so wirst du deine Kunst  
Vor mir bewähren müssen — Nimm die Armbrust —  
Du hast sie gleich zur Hand — und mach' dich fertig,  
Einen Apfel von des Knaben Kopf zu schießen —  
Doch will ich raten, ziele gut, daß du



Den Apfel treffest auf den ersten Schuß;  
Denn fehlst du ihn, so ist dein Kopf verloren.

(Alle geben Zeichen des Schreckens.)

Tell.

Herr — Welches Ungeheure sinnet ihr  
Mir an? — Ich soll vom Haupte meines Kindes — 1890  
— Nein, nein doch, lieber Herr, das kommt euch nicht  
Zu Sinn — Verhüt's der gnäd'ge Gott — Das könnt ihr  
Im Ernst von einem Vater nicht begehren!

Gesler.

Du wirst den Apfel schießen von dem Kopf  
Des Knaben — ich begeh'r's und will's. 1895

Tell.

Ich soll

Mit meiner Armbrust auf das liebe Haupt  
Des eignen Kindes zielen? — Eher sterb' ich!

Gesler.

Du schießest, oder stirbst mit deinem Knaben.

Tell.

Ich soll der Mörder werden meines Kindes!  
Herr, ihr habt keine Kinder — wisset nicht,  
Was sich bewegt in eines Vaters Herzen. 1900

Gesler.

Ei, Tell, du bist ja plötzlich so besonnen!  
Man sagte mir, daß du ein Träumer seist  
Und dich entfernst von andrer Menschen Weise, 1905  
Du liebst das Seltsame — drum hab' ich jetzt  
Ein eigen Wagstück für dich ausgesucht.  
Ein andrer wohl bedächte sich — du drückst  
Die Augen zu und greiffst es herzhast an.

**Bertha.**

Scherzt nicht, o Herr, mit diesen armen Leuten!  
Ihr seht sie bleich und zitternd stehn — so wenig  
Sind sie Kurzweils gewohnt aus eurem Munde. 1910

**Gesler.**

Wer sagt euch, daß ich scherze?

(Greift nach einem Baumzweige, der über ihn herhängt.)

Hier ist der Apfel.

Man mache Raum — Er nehme seine Weite,  
Wie's Brauch ist — Achtzig Schritte geb' ich ihm — 1915  
Nicht weniger, noch mehr — Er rühmte sich,  
Auf ihrer hundert seinen Mann zu treffen —  
Jetzt, Schütze, triff und fehle nicht das Ziel!

**Rudolf der Haxras.**

Gott, das wird ernsthaft — Falle nieder, Knabe,  
Es gilt, und fleh' den Landvogt um dein Leben! 1920

Walther Fürst (beisette zu Melchtal, der kaum seine Ungeduld  
bezwingt).

Haltet an euch, ich fleh' euch drum, bleibt ruhig!

**Bertha** (zum Landvogt).

Laßt es genug sein, Herr! Unmenschlich ist's,  
Mit eines Vaters Angst also zu spielen.

Wenn dieser arme Mann auch Leib und Leben  
Verwirkt durch seine leichte Schuld, bei Gott! 1925

Er hätte jetzt zehnfachen Tod empfunden.  
Entlast ihn ungekränkt in seine Hütte,  
Er hat euch kennen lernen; dieser Stunde  
Wird er und seine Kindesfinder denken.

**Gesler.**

Öffnet die Gasse — Frisch, was zauderst du?  
Dein Leben ist verwirkt, ich kann dich töten; 1930



Und sieh, ich lege gnädig dein Geschick  
 In deine eigne kunstgeübte Hand.  
 Der kann nicht klagen über harten Spruch,  
 Den man zum Meister seines Schicksals macht. 1935  
 Du rühmst dich deines sichern Blicks. Wohlan!  
 Hier gilt es, Schütze, deine Kunst zu zeigen;  
 Das Ziel ist würdig, und der Preis ist groß!  
 Das Schwarze treffen in der Scheibe, das  
 Kann auch ein anderer; der ist mir der Meister, 1940  
 Der seiner Kunst gewiß ist überall,  
 Dem 's Herz nicht in die Hand tritt, noch ins Auge.

Walther Fürst (wirft sich vor ihm nieder).

Herr Landvogt, wir erkennen eure Hoheit;  
 Doch lasset Gnad' vor Recht ergehen, nehmt  
 Die Hälfte meiner Habe, nehmt sie ganz! 1945  
 Nur dieses Gräßliche erlasset einem Vater!

Walther Tell.

Großvater, knie nicht vor dem falschen Mann!  
 Sagt, wo ich hinstehn soll! Ich fürcht' mich nicht.  
 Der Vater trifft den Vogel ja im Flug,  
 Er wird nicht fehlen auf das Herz des Kindes. 1950

Stauffacher.

Herr Landvogt, rührt euch nicht des Kindes Unschuld?

Köffelmann.

O, denkt, daß ein Gott im Himmel ist,  
 Dem ihr müßt Rede stehn für eure Thaten.

Gesler (zeigt auf den Knaben).

Man bind' ihn an die Linde dort!

Walther Tell.

Mich binden!

Nein, ich will nicht gebunden sein. Ich will 1955

Still halten, wie ein Lamm, und auch nicht atmen.  
Wenn ihr mich bindet, nein, so kann ich's nicht,  
So werd' ich toben gegen meine Bande.

Rudolf der Haxras.

Die Augen nur laß dir verbinden, Knabe!

Walther Tell.

Warum die Augen? Denket ihr, ich fürchte  
Den Pfeil von Vaters Hand? Ich will ihn fest  
Erwarten und nicht zucken mit den Wimpern.  
— Frisch, Vater, zeig's, daß du ein Schütze bist!  
Er glaubt dir's nicht, er denkt uns zu verderben —  
Dem Wütrich zum Verdrusse schieß und triff!

(Er geht an die Binde, man legt ihm den Apfel auf.)

Melchthal (zu den Landleuten).

Was? Soll der Frevel sich vor unsern Augen  
Vollenden? Wozu haben wir geschworen?

Stauffacher.

Es ist umsonst. Wir haben keine Waffen;  
Ihr seht den Wald von Lanzen um uns her.

Melchthal.

O, hätten wir's mit frischer That vollendet!  
Verzeih's Gott denen, die zum Aufschub rieten!

Gesler (zum 2. u. 11.).

Ans Werk! Man führt die Waffen nicht vergebens.  
Gefährlich ist's, ein Mordgewehr zu tragen,  
Und auf den Schützen springt der Pfeil zurück.  
Dies stolze Recht, das sich der Bauer nimmt,  
Beleidiget den höchsten Herrn des Landes.  
Gewaffnet sei niemand, als wer gebietet.  
Freut's euch, den Pfeil zu führen und den Bogen,  
Wohl, so will ich das Ziel euch dazu geben.



**Tell** (spannt die Armbrust und legt den Pfeil auf).

Öffnet die Gasse! Platz!

1980

**Stauffacher.**

Was, Tell? Ihr wolltet — Nimmermehr — Ihr zittert,  
Die Hand erbebt euch, eure Kniee wanken —

**Tell** (läßt die Armbrust sinken).

Mir schwimmt es vor den Augen!

**Weiber.**

Gott im Himmel!

**Tell** (zum Landvogt).

Erlasset mir den Schuß! Hier ist mein Herz!

(Er reißt die Brust auf.)

Kuht eure Reifigen und stoßt mich nieder!

1985

**Gessler.**

Ich will dein Leben nicht, ich will den Schuß.

— Du kannst ja alles, Tell, an nichts verzagst du;

Das Steuerruder führst du wie den Bogen,

Dich schreckt kein Sturm, wenn es zu retten gilt.

Jetzt, Ketter, hilf dir selbst — du rettetest alle!

1990

(Tell steht in fürchterlichem Kampf, mit den Händen zuckend und die rollenden Augen bald auf den Landvogt, bald zum Himmel gerichtet. — Plötzlich greift er in seinen Röcher, nimmt einen zweiten Pfeil heraus und scheidet ihn in seinen Soller. Der Landvogt bemerkt alle diese Bewegungen.)

**Walther Tell** (unter der Linde).

Water, schieß zu! Ich fürcht' mich nicht.

**Tell.**

Es muß!

(Er rafft sich zusammen und legt an.)

**Rudenz** (der die ganze Zeit über in der heftigsten Spannung gestanden und mit Gewalt an sich gehalten, tritt hervor).

Herr Landvogt, weiter werdet ihr's nicht treiben,  
Ihr werdet nicht — Es war nur eine Prüfung —

Den Zweck habt ihr erreicht — Zu weit getrieben,  
Verfehlt die Strenge ihres weisen Zwecks, 1995  
Und allzustraff gespannt, zerpringt der Bogen.

Gesler.

Ihr schweigt, bis man euch aufruft!

Rudenz.

Ich will reden!

Ich darf's! Des Königs Ehre ist mir heilig;  
Doch solches Regiment muß Haß erwerben.  
Das ist des Königs Wille nicht — ich darf's 2000  
Behaupten — Solche Grausamkeit verdient  
Mein Volk nicht, dazu habt ihr keine Vollmacht.

Gesler.

Na, ihr erkühnt euch!

Rudenz.

Ich hab' still geschwiegen

Zu allen schweren Thaten, die ich sah;  
Mein sehend Auge hab' ich zugeschlossen, 2005  
Mein überschwellig und empörtes Herz  
Hab' ich hinabgedrückt in meinen Busen.  
Doch länger schweigen wär' Verrat zugleich  
An meinem Vaterland' und an dem Kaiser.

Bertha (wirft sich zwischen Ihn und den Landvogt).

O Gott, ihr reizt den Wütenden noch mehr. 2010

Rudenz.

Mein Volk verließ ich, meinen Blutsverwandten  
Entsagt' ich, alle Bande der Natur  
Zerriß ich, um an euch mich anzuschließen —  
Das Beste aller glaubt' ich zu befördern,  
Da ich des Kaisers Macht befestigte — 2015  
Die Binde fällt von meinen Augen — Schauernd

Geh' ich an einen Abgrund mich geführt —  
 Mein freies Urtheil habt ihr irr geleitet,  
 Mein redlich Herz verführt — Ich war daran,  
 Mein Volk in bester Meinung zu verderben.

2020

Gesler.

Berwegner, diese Sprache deinem Herrn?

Rudenz.

Der Kaiser ist mein Herr, nicht ihr — Frei bin ich  
 Wie ihr geboren, und ich messe mich  
 Mit euch in jeder ritterlichen Tugend.  
 Und stündet ihr nicht hier in Kaisers Namen,  
 Den ich verehere, selbst wo man ihn schändet,  
 Den Handschuh wär' ich vor euch hin, ihr solltet  
 Nach ritterlichem Brauch mir Antwort geben.  
 — Ja, winkt nur euren Reisigen — Ich stehe  
 Nicht wehrlos da, wie d i e — (auf das Volk zeigend)

2025

Ich hab' ein Schwert, 2030

Und wer mir naht —

Stauffacher (ruft).

Der Apfel ist gefallen!

(Indem sich alle nach dieser Seite gewendet und Bertha zwischen  
 Rudenz und den Landvogt sich geworfen, hat Tell den Pfeil  
 abgedrückt).

Rösselmann.

Der Knabe lebt!

Viele Stimmen.

Der Apfel ist getroffen!

(Walther Fürst schwankt und droht zu sinken, Bertha hält ihn).

Gesler (erstaunt).

Er hat geschossen? Wie? Der Rasende!

Bertha.

Der Knabe lebt! Kommt zu euch, guter Vater!

Walthex Tell (kommt mit dem Apfel gesprungen).

Vater, hier ist der Apfel — Wußt' ich's ja, 2035

Du würdest deinen Knaben nicht verlegen.

(Tell stand mit vorgebogenem Leib, als wollt' er dem Pfeil folgen — die Armbrust entsinkt seiner Hand — wie er den Knaben kommen sieht, eilt er ihm mit ausgereiteten Armen entgegen und hebt ihn mit heftiger Inbrunst zu seinem Herzen hinauf; in dieser Stellung starrt er kraftlos zusammen. Alle stehen gerührt.)

Bertha.

O gütt'ger Himmel!

Walthex Fürst (zu Vater und Sohn.)

Kinder! meine Kinder!

Stauffacher.

Gott sei gelobt!

Leuthold.

Das war ein Schuß! Davon  
Wird man noch reden in den spätesten Zeiten.

Rudolf der Harnas.

Erzählen wird man von dem Schützen Tell, 2040  
So lang' die Berge stehn auf ihrem Grunde.

(Reicht dem Landvogt den Apfel.)

Gesler.

Bei Gott, der Apfel mitten durch geschossen!  
Es war ein Meisterschuß, ich muß ihn loben.

Köffelmann.

Der Schuß war gut; doch wehe dem, der ihn  
Dazu getrieben, daß er Gott versuchte! 2045

Stauffacher.

Kommt zu euch, Tell, steht auf, ihr habt euch männlich  
Gelöst, und frei könnt ihr nach Hause gehen,

Küffelmann.

Kommt, kommt und bringt der Mutter ihren Sohn!

(Sie wollen ihn wegführen.)

Gesler.

Tell, höre!

Tell (kommt zurück).

Was befehlt ihr, Herr?

Gesler.

Du stecktest

Noch einen zweiten Pfeil zu dir — Ja, ja,  
Ich sah es wohl — Was meintest du damit?

2050

Tell (verlegen).

Herr, das ist also bräuchlich bei den Schützen.

Gesler.

Nein, Tell, die Antwort laß ich dir nicht gelten;  
Es wird was anders wohl bedeutet haben.

Sag' mir die Wahrheit frisch und fröhlich, Tell!  
Was es auch sei, dein Leben sichr' ich dir.

2055

Wozu der zweite Pfeil?

Tell.

Wohlan, o Herr,

Weil ihr mich meines Lebens habt gesichert —  
So will ich euch die Wahrheit gründlich sagen.

(Er zieht den Pfeil aus dem Goller und sieht den Landvogt mit einem fürchtbaren Blick an.)

Mit diesem zweiten Pfeil durchschöß ich — euch,  
Wenn ich mein liebes Kind getroffen hätte,  
Und eurer — wahrlich! hätt' ich nicht gefehlt.

2060

Gesler.

Wohl, Tell! Des Lebens hab' ich dich gesichert,  
Ich gab mein Ritterwort, das will ich halten —

Doch weil ich deinen bösen Sinn erkannt,  
 Will ich dich führen lassen und verwahren,  
 Wo weder Mond noch Sonne dich bescheint,  
 Damit ich sicher sei vor deinen Pfeilen.  
 Ergreift ihn, Knechte! Bindet ihn! (Zell wird gebunden.)

Stauffacher.

Wie, Herr!

So könntet ihr an einem Manne handeln,  
 An dem sich Gottes Hand sichtbar verkündigt?

Gesler.

Laß sehn, ob sie ihn zweimal retten wird.  
 — Man bring' ihn auf mein Schiff! Ich folge nach  
 Sogleich, ich selbst will ihn nach Rügenacht führen.

Köffelmann.

Das dürft ihr nicht, das darf der Kaiser nicht,  
 Das widerstreitet unsern Freiheitsbriefen!

Gesler..

Wo sind sie? Hat der Kaiser sie bestätigt?  
 Er hat sie nicht bestätigt — Diese Gunst  
 Muß erst erworben werden durch Gehorsam.  
 Rebellen seid ihr alle gegen Kaisers  
 Gericht und nährt verwegene Empörung.  
 Ich kenn' euch alle — ich durchschau' euch ganz —  
 Den nehm' ich jetzt heraus aus eurer Mitte;  
 Doch alle seid ihr theilhaft seiner Schuld.  
 Wer klug ist, lerne schweigen und gehorchen.

(Er entfernt sich, Bertha, Rudenz, Garraß und Knechte folgen,  
 Frießhardt und Reuthold bleiben zurück.)

Walther Fürst (in heftigem Schmerz).

Es ist vorbei; er hat's beschlossen, mich  
 Mit meinem ganzen Hause zu verderben!





Stauffacher (zum Tell).

O, warum müßtet ihr den Wütrich reizen!

Tell.

Bezwinde dich, wer meinen Schmerz gefühlt!

Stauffacher.

O, nun ist alles, alles hin! Mit euch  
Sind wir gefesselt alle und gebunden!

2090

Kandleute (umringen den Tell).

Mit euch geht unser letzter Trost dahin!

Leuthold (näbert sich).

Tell, es erbarmt mich — doch ich muß gehorchen.

Tell.

Lebt wohl!

Walther Tell (sich mit heftigem Schmerz an ihn schmiegend).

O Vater! Vater! lieber Vater!

Tell (hebt die Arme zum Himmel).

Dort droben ist dein Vater! Den ruf' an!

2095

Stauffacher.

Tell, sag' ich eurem Weibe nichts von euch?

Tell (hebt den Knaben mit Inbrunst an seine Brust.)

Der Knab' ist unverletzt; mir wird Gott helfen.

(Reißt sich schnell los und folgt den Waffentnechten.)

## Vierter Aufzug.

## Erste Scene.

## Östliches Ufer des Bierwaldstättersees.

Die seltsam gestalteten schroffen Felsen im Westen schließen den Prospect.  
Der See ist bewegt, heftiges Rauschen und Tosen, dazwischen Blitze  
und Donnerschläge.

Kunz von Gersau. Fischer und Fischerknabe.

Kunz.

Ich sah's mit Augen an, ihr könnt mir's glauben;  
's ist alles so geschehn, wie ich euch sagte.

Fischer.

Der Tell gefangen abgeführt nach Rüznacht, 2100  
Der beste Mann im Land, der bravste Arm,  
Wenn's einmal gelten sollte für die Freiheit.

Kunz.

Der Landvogt führt ihn selbst den See herauf;  
Sie waren eben dran, sich einzuschiffen,  
Als ich von Flüelen abfuhr; doch der Sturm, 2105  
Der eben jetzt im Anzug ist, und der  
Auch mich gezwungen, eilends hier zu landen,  
Mag ihre Abfahrt wohl verhindert haben.

Fischer.

Der Tell in Fesseln, in des Vogts Gewalt!  
O, glaubt, er wird ihn tief genug vergraben, 2110  
Daß er des Tages Licht nicht wieder sieht!  
Denn fürchten muß er die gerechte Rache  
Des freien Mannes, den er schwer gereizt!

Kunz.

Der Altlandammann auch, der edle Herr  
Von Attinghausen, sagt man, lieg' am Tode. 2115

Fischer.

So bricht der letzte Anker unsrer Hoffnung!  
 Der war es noch allein, der seine Stimme  
 Erheben durfte für des Volkes Rechte!

Kunz.

Der Sturm nimmt überhand. Gehabt euch wohl!  
 Ich nehme Herberg' in dem Dorf; denn heut' 2120  
 Ist doch an keine Abfahrt mehr zu denken. (Geht ab.)

Fischer.

Der Tell gefangen und der Freiherr tot!  
 Erheb' die freche Stirne, Tyrannei,  
 Wirf alle Scham hinweg! Der Mund der Wahrheit  
 Ist stumm, das sehnde Auge ist geblendet, 2125  
 Der Arm, der retten sollte, ist gefesselt!

Anabe.

Es hagelt schwer. Kommt in die Hütte, Vater,  
 Es ist nicht kummlich, hier im Freien hausen.

Fischer.

Raset, ihr Winde! Flammt herab, ihr Blitze!  
 Ihr Wolken, berstet! Gießt herunter, Ströme 2130  
 Des Himmels, und ersäuft das Land! Zerstört  
 Im Keim die ungeborenen Geschlechter!  
 Ihr wilden Elemente, werdet Herr!  
 Ihr Bären, kommt, ihr alten Wölfe wieder  
 Der großen Wüste! euch gehört das Land. 2135  
 Wer wird hier leben wollen ohne Freiheit!

Anabe.

Hört, wie der Abgrund tost, der Wirbel brüllt,  
 So hat's noch nie geraßt in diesem Schlunde!

Fischer.

Zu zielen auf des eignen Kindes Haupt,

Solches ward keinem Vater noch geboten!  
 Und die Natur soll nicht in wildem Grimm  
 Sich drob empören — O, mich soll's nicht wundern,  
 Wenn sich die Felsen bücken in den See,  
 Wenn jene Zacken, jene Eifestürme,  
 Die nie aufstauten seit dem Schöpfungstag,  
 Von ihren hohen Kulmen niederschmelzen,  
 Wenn die Berge brechen, wenn die alten Klüfte  
 Einstürzen, eine zweite Sündflut alle  
 Wohnstätten der Lebendigen verschlingt!

(Man hört läuten.)

Anabe.

Hört ihr, sie läuten droben auf dem Berg.  
 Gewiß hat man ein Schiff in Not gesehn  
 Und zieht die Glocke, daß gebetet werde. (Steigt auf eine  
 Anhöhe.)

Fischer.

Wehe dem Fahrzeug, das, jetzt unterwegs,  
 In dieser furchtbarn Wiege wird gewiegt!  
 Hier ist das Steuer unnütz und der Steurer,  
 Der Sturm ist Meister, Wind und Welle spielen  
 Ball mit dem Menschen — Da ist nah und fern  
 Kein Busen, der ihm freundlich Schutz gewährte!  
 Handlos und schroff ansteigend starren ihm  
 Die Felsen, die unwirtlichen, entgegen  
 Und weisen ihm nur ihre steinern schrofne Brust.

Anabe (deutet links).

Vater, ein Schiff! es kommt von Flüelen her.

Fischer.

Gott helf' den armen Leuten! Wenn der Sturm  
 In dieser Wasserkluft sich erst verfangen,  
 Dann rast er um sich mit des Raubtiers Angst,

Das an des Gitters Eisenstäbe schlägt;  
 Die Pforte sucht er heulend sich vergebens;  
 Denn ringsum schränken ihn die Felsen ein,  
 Die himmelhoch den engen Paß vermauern.

(Er steigt auf die Anhöhe.)

Knabe.

Es ist das Herrenschiß von Uri, Vater, 2170  
 Ich kenn's am roten Dach und an der Fahne.

Fischer.

Gerichte Gottes! Ja, er ist es selbst,  
 Der Landvogt, der da fährt — Dort schiff't er hin  
 Und führt im Schiffe sein Verbrechen mit!  
 Schnell hat der Arm des Rächers ihn gefunden, 2175  
 Jetzt kennt er über sich den stärkern Herrn.

Diese Wellen geben nicht auf seine Stimme,  
 Diese Felsen bücken ihre Häupter nicht  
 Vor seinem Hute — Knabe, bete nicht!  
 Greif' nicht dem Richter in den Arm! 2180

Knabe.

Ich bete für den Landvogt nicht — Ich bete  
 Für den Tell, der auf dem Schiffe sich mit befindet.

Fischer.

O Unvernunft des blinden Elements!  
 (Mußt du, um einen Schuldigen zu treffen,)  
 Das Schiff mit samt dem Steuermann verderben! 2185

Knabe.

Sieh, sieh, sie waren glücklich schon vorbei  
 Am Buggisgrat; doch die Gewalt des Sturmes,  
 Der von dem Teufelsmünster widerprallt,  
 Wirft sie zum großen Arzenberg zurück.  
 — Ich seh' sie nicht mehr.

Fischer.

Dort ist das Hackmesser,

2190

Wo schon der Schiffe mehrere gebrochen.  
Wenn sie nicht weislich dort vorüberlenken,  
So wird das Schiff zerschmettert an der Fluh,  
Die sich gähstokig absenkt in die Tiefe.

— Sie haben einen guten Steuermann

2195

Am Bord; könnt' einer retten, wär's der Tell;  
Doch dem sind Arm' und Hände ja gefesselt.

Wilhelm Tell mit der Armbrust.

(Er kommt mit raschen Schritten, blickt erkant umher und zeigt die heftigste Bewegung. (Wenn er mitten auf der Scene) ist, wirft er sich nieder, die Hände zu der Erde und dann zum Himmel ausbreitend.)

Anabe (bemerkt ihn).

Sieh, Vater, wer der Mann ist, der dort kniet?

Fischer.

(Er faßt die Erde an mit seinen Händen  
Und scheint wie außer sich zu sein.

2200

Anabe (kommt vorwärts).

Was seh' ich! Vater! Vater, kommt und seht!

Fischer (nähert sich).

Wer ist es? — Gott im Himmel! Was! der Tell?  
Wie kommt ihr hieher? Redet!

Anabe.

Wart ihr nicht  
Dort auf dem Schiff gefangen und gebunden?

Fischer.

Ihr wurdet nicht nach Rütznacht abgeführt?

2205

Tell (Reht auf).

Ich bin befreit.

Fischer und Anabe.

Befreit! O Wunder Gottes!

Anabe.

Wo kommt ihr her?

Tell.

Dort aus dem Schiffe.

Fischer.

Was?

Anabe (augleich).

Wo ist der Landvogt?

Tell.

Auf den Wellen treibt er.

Fischer.

Ist's möglich? Aber ihr? Wie seid ihr hier?  
Seid euren Banden und dem Sturm entkommen?

2210

Tell.

Durch Gottes gnäd'ge Fürs ehung — Hört an!

Fischer und Anabe.

O, redet, redet!

Tell.

Was in Altorf sich

Begeben, wißt ihr's?

Fischer.

Alles weiß ich, redet!

Tell.

Daß mich der Landvogt fahen ließ und binden,  
Nach seiner Burg zu Rühnacht wollte führen.

2215

Fischer.

Und sich mit euch zu Flüelen eingeschiff.  
Wir wissen alles. Sprecht, wie ihr entkommen?

Tell.

Ich lag im Schiff, mit Stricken fest gebunden,

Wehrlos, ein aufgegebenner Mann — Nicht hofft' ich,  
 Das frohe Licht der Sonne mehr zu sehn, 2220  
 Der Gattin und der Kinder liebes Antlig,  
 Und trostlos blickt' ich in die Wasserwüste —

Fischer.

O armer Mann!

Tell.

So fuhren wir dahin,  
 Der Bogt, Rudolf der Harras und die Knechte.  
 Mein Köcher aber mit der Armbrust lag 2225  
 Am hintern Gransen bei dem Steuerruder.  
 Und als wir an die Ecke jetzt gelangt  
 Beim kleinen Aren, da verhängt' es Gott,  
 Daß solch ein grausam mörderisch Ungewitter  
 Gählings herfürbrach aus des Gotthards Schlingen, 2230  
 Daß allen Ruderern das Herz entsank,  
 Und meinten alle, elend zu ertrinken.  
 Da hört' ich's, wie der Diener einer sich  
 Zum Landvogt wendet' und die Worte sprach:  
 „Ihr sehet eure Not und unsre, Herr, 2235  
 Und daß wir all' am Rand des Todes schweben —  
 Die Steuerleute aber wissen sich  
 Vor großer Furcht nicht Rat und sind des Fahrens  
 Nicht wohl berichtet — Nun aber ist der Tell  
 Ein starker Mann und weiß ein Schiff zu steuern. 2240  
 Wie, wenn wir sein jetzt brauchten in der Not?“  
 Da sprach der Bogt zu mir: „Tell, wenn du dir's  
 Getrauest, uns zu helfen aus dem Sturm,  
 So möcht' ich dich der Bande wohl entled'gen.“  
 Ich aber sprach: „Ja, Herr, mit Gottes Hilfe 2245  
 Getraut' ich mir's und helf' uns wohl hiedannen.“  
 So ward ich meiner Bande los und stand



Am Steuerruder und fuhr redlich hin;  
 Doch schielt' ich seitwärts, wo mein Schießzeug lag,  
 Und an dem Ufer merkt' ich scharf umher, 2250  
 Wo sich ein Vorteil aufthät' zum Entspringen.  
 Und wie ich eines Felsenriffs gewahre,  
 Das abgeplattet vorsprang in den See —

Fischer.

Ich kenn's, es ist am Fuß des großen Axen,  
 Doch nicht für möglich acht' ich's — so gar steil 2255  
 Gehl's an — vom Schiff es springend abzureichen.—

Tell.

Schrie ich den Knechten, handlich zuzugehn,  
 Bis daß wir vor die Felsenplatte kämen,  
 Dort, rief ich, sei das Ärgste überstanden —  
 Und als wir sie frischrudertnd bald erreicht, 2260  
 Fleh' ich die Gnade Gottes an und drücke,  
 Mit allen Leibeskräften angestemmt,

Den hintern Gransen an die Felswand hin. |  
 Jetzt, schnell mein Schießzeug fassend, schwing' ich selbst  
 Hochspringend auf die Platte mich hinauf, 2265  
 Und mit gewalt'gem Fußstoß hinter mich  
 Schleudr' ich das Schifflin in den Schlund der Wasser —  
 Dort mag's, wie Gott will, auf den Wellen treiben!  
 So bin ich hier, gerettet aus des Sturms  
 Gewalt und aus der schlimmeren der Menschen. 2270

Fischer.

Tell, Tell! ein sichtbar Wunder hat der Herr  
 An euch gethan; kaum glaub' ich's meinen Sinnen —  
 Doch saget! Wo gedenket ihr jetzt hin?  
 Denn Sicherheit ist nicht für euch, wofern  
 Der Landvogt lebend diesem Sturm entkommt. 2275

Tell.

Ich hört' ihn sagen, da ich noch im Schiff  
Gebunden lag, er woll' bei Brunnen landen  
Und über Schwyz nach seiner Burg mich führen.

Fischer.

Will er den Weg dahin zu Lande nehmen?

Tell.

Er denkt's.

Fischer.

O, so verbergt euch ohne Säumen! 2280  
Nicht zweimal hilft euch Gott aus seiner Hand.

Tell.

Nennt mir den nächsten Weg nach Arth und Rüşnacht.

Fischer.

Die offne Straße zieht sich über Steinen;  
Doch einen kürzern Weg und heimlichern  
Kann euch mein Knabe über Lownerz führen. 2285

Tell (gibt ihm die Hand).

Gott lohn' euch eure Gutthat. Lebet wohl!

(Geht und kehrt wieder um.)

— Habt ihr nicht auch im Rütli mitgeschworen?  
Mir deucht, man nannt' euch mir.

Fischer.

Ich war dabei  
Und hab' den Eid des Bundes mit beschworen.

Tell.

So eilt nach Bürglen, thut die Lieb' mir an!  
Mein Weib verzagt um mich; verkündet ihr,  
Daß ich gerettet sei und wohl geborgen. 2290

Fischer.

Doch wohin sag' ich ihr, daß ihr geflohn?

Tell.

Ihr werdet meinen Schwäher bei ihr finden  
Und andre, die im Rüttli mitgeschworen —  
Sie sollen wacker sein und gutes Muts,  
Der Tell sei frei und seines Armes mächtig;  
Bald werden sie ein Weitres von mir hören.

2295

Fischer.

Was habt ihr im Gemüt? Entdeckt mir's frei!

Tell.

Ist es gethan, wird's auch zur Rede kommen. (Seht ab.) 2300

Fischer.

Zeig' ihm den Weg, Jenni — Gott steh' ihm bei!  
Er führt's zum Ziel, was er auch unternommen. (Seht ab.)

## Zweite Scene.

## Edelhof zu Attinghausen.

Der Freiherr, in einem Armsessel, sterbend. Waltherr Fürst,  
Stauffacher, Melchthal und Baumgarten um ihn beschäftigt.  
Waltherr Tell, knieend vor dem Sterbenden.

Waltherr Fürst.

Es ist vorbei mit ihm, er ist hinüber.

Stauffacher.

Er liegt nicht wie ein Toter — Seht, die Feder  
Auf seinen Lippen regt sich! Ruhig ist  
Sein Schlaf, und friedlich lächeln seine Züge.

2305

(Baumgarten geht an die Thüre und spricht mit jemand.)

Waltherr Fürst (zu Baumgarten).

Wer ist's?

Baumgarten (kommt zurück).

Es ist Frau Hedwig, eure Tochter;  
Sie will euch sprechen, will den Knaben sehn.

(Waltherr Tell richtet sich auf.)

Waltherr Fürst.

Kann ich sie trösten? Hab' ich selber Trost?  
Häuft alles Leiden sich auf meinem Haupt?

2310

Hedwig (hereindringend).

Wo ist mein Kind? Laßt mich, ich muß es sehn —

Stauffacher.

Faßt euch! Bedenkt, daß ihr im Haus des Todes —

Hedwig (fürzt auf den Knaben).

Mein Wälti! O, er lebt mir!

Waltherr Tell (hängt an ihr).

Arme Mutter!

Hedwig.

Ist's auch gewiß? Bist du mir unverletzt?

(Betrachtet ihn mit ängstlicher Sorgfalt.)

Und ist es möglich? Konnt' er auf dich zielen?

2315

Wie konnt' er's? O, er hat kein Herz — Er konnte  
Den Pfeil abdrücken auf sein eignes Kind!

Waltherr Fürst.

Er that's mit Angst, mit schmerzzerrißner Seele;  
Gezwungen that er's, denn es galt das Leben.

Hedwig.

O, hätt' er eines Vaters Herz, eh' er's  
Gethan, er wäre tausendmal gestorben!

2320

Stauffacher.

Ihr solltet Gottes gnäd'ge Schickung preisen,  
Die es so gut gelenkt —

## Hedwig.

Kann ich vergessen,  
 Wie's hätte kommen können? — Gott des Himmels!  
 Und lebt' ich achtzig Jahr' — ich seh' den Knaben ewig 2325  
 Gebunden stehn, den Vater auf ihn zielen,  
 Und ewig fliegt der Pfeil mir in das Herz.

## Melchthal.

Frau, wüßtet ihr, wie ihn der Vogt gereizt!

## Hedwig.

O rohes Herz der Männer! Wenn ihr Stolz  
 Beleidigt wird, dann achten sie nichts mehr; 2330  
 Sie setzen in der blinden Wut des Spiels  
 Das Haupt des Kindes und das Herz der Mutter!

## Baumgarten.

Ist eures Mannes Ros nicht hart genug,  
 Daß ihr mit schwerem Tadel ihn noch kränkt?  
 Für seine Leiden habt ihr kein Gefühl? 2335

Hedwig (kehrt sich nach ihm um und sieht ihn mit einem großen Blick an).

Haßt du nur Thränen für des Freundes Unglück?  
 — Wo waret ihr, da man den Trefflichen  
 In Bande schlug? Wo war da eure Hilfe?  
 Ihr sahet zu, ihr ließt das Gräßliche geschehn;  
 Geduldig littet ihr's, daß man den Freund 2340  
 Aus eurer Mitte führte — Hat der Tell  
 Auch so an euch gehandelt? Stand er auch  
 Bedauernd da, als hinter dir die Reiter  
 Des Landvogts drangen, als der müß'ge See  
 Vor dir erbrauste? Nicht mit müß'gen Thränen 2345  
 Beklagt' er dich, in den Nachen sprang er, Weib  
 Und Kind vergaß er und befreite dich —

## Walther Fürst.

Was konnten wir zu seiner Rettung wagen,  
Die kleine Zahl, die unbewaffnet war!

Hedwig (wirft sich an seine Brust).

O Vater! Und auch du hast ihn verloren! 2350

Das Land, wir alle haben ihn verloren!

Uns allen fehlt er, ach, wir fehlen ihm!

Gott rette seine Seele vor Verzweiflung.

Zu ihm hinab ins öde Burgverließ

Dringt keines Freundes Trost — Wenn er erkrankte! 2355

Ach, in des Kerkers feuchter Finsternis

Muß er erkranken — Wie die Alpenrose

Bleicht und verkümmert in der Sumpfesluft,

So ist für ihn kein Leben als im Licht

Der Sonne, in dem Balsamstrom der Rüste. 2360

Gefangen! Er! Sein Atem ist die Freiheit,

Er kann nicht leben in dem Hauch der Gräfte.

## Stauffacher.

Beruhigt euch! Wir alle wollen handeln,

Um seinen Kerker aufzuthun.

## Hedwig.

Was könnt ihr schaffen ohne ihn? — So lang' 2365

Der Zell noch frei war, ja, da war noch Hoffnung,

Da hatte noch die Unschuld einen Freund,

Da hatte einen Helfer der Verfolgte,

Euch alle rettete der Zell — Ihr alle

Zusammen könnt nicht seine Fesseln lösen! 2370

(Der Freiherr erwacht.)

## Baumgarten.

Er regt sich, still!



Attinghausen (sich aufrichtend).

Wo ist er?

Stauffacher.

Wer?

Attinghausen.

Er fehlt mir,

Verläßt mich in dem letzten Augenblick!

Stauffacher.

Er meint den Junker — Schickt man nach ihm?

Walther Fürst.

Es ist nach ihm gesendet — Tröstet euch!

Er hat sein Herz gefunden, er ist unser.

2375

Attinghausen.

Hat er gesprochen für sein Vaterland?

Stauffacher.

Mit Heldenkühnheit.

Attinghausen.

Warum kommt er nicht,

Um meinen letzten Segen zu empfangen?

Ich fühle, daß es schleunig mit mir endet.

Stauffacher.

Nicht also, edler Herr! Der kurze Schlaf

Hat euch erquickt, und hell ist euer Blick.

2380

Attinghausen.

Der Schmerz ist Leben, er verließ mich auch.

Das Leiden ist, so wie die Hoffnung, aus.

(Er bemerkt den Knaben.)

Wer ist der Knabe?

Walther Fürst.

Segnet ihn, o Herr!

Er ist mein Enkel und ist vaterlos. 2385

(Edwig sinkt mit dem Knaben vor dem Sterbenden nieder.)

Attinghausen.

Und vaterlos laß ich euch alle, alle  
Zurück — Weh mir, daß meine letzten Blicke  
Den Untergang des Vaterlands gesehn!  
Mußt' ich des Lebens höchstes Maß erreichen,  
Um ganz mit allen Hoffnungen zu sterben! 2390

Stauffacher (zu Walther Fürst).

Soll er in diesem finstern Kummer scheiden?  
Erhellen wir ihm nicht die letzte Stunde  
Mit schönem Strahl der Hoffnung? — Edler Freiherr!  
Erhebet euren Geist! Wir sind nicht ganz  
Verlassen, sind nicht rettungslos verloren. 2395

Attinghausen.

Wer soll euch retten?

Walther Fürst.

Wir uns selbst. Vernehmt!

Es haben die drei Lände sich das Wort  
Gegeben, die Tyrannen zu verjagen.  
Geschlossen ist der Bund; ein heil'ger Schwur  
Verbindet uns. Es wird gehandelt werden, 2400  
Eh' noch das Jahr den neuen Kreis beginnt.  
Euer Staub wird ruhn in einem freien Lande.

Attinghausen.

O, saget mir! Geschlossen ist der Bund?

Alchthal.

Am gleichen Tage werden alle drei  
Waldstätte sich erheben. Alles ist 2405





Bereit und das Geheimnis wohlbewahrt  
 Bis jetzt, obgleich viel' Hunderte es teilen.  
 Hohl ist der Boden unter den Tyrannen,  
 Die Tage ihrer Herrschaft sind gezählt,  
 Und bald ist ihre Spur nicht mehr zu finden.

2410

Attinghausen.

Die festen Burgen aber in den Länden?

Melchthal.

Sie fallen alle an dem gleichen Tag.

Attinghausen.

Und sind die Edeln dieses Bunds theilhaftig?

Stauffacher.

Wir harren ihres Beistands, wenn es gilt;  
 Jetzt aber hat der Landmann nur geschworen.

2415

Attinghausen.

(Nichtet sich langsam in die Höhe mit großem Erstaunen.)

Hat sich der Landmann solcher That verwogen,  
 Aus eignem Mittel, ohne Hilf der Edeln,  
 Hat er der eignen Kraft so viel vertraut —  
 Ja, dann bedarf es unserer nicht mehr;  
 Getröstet können wir zu Grabe steigen,  
 Es lebt nach uns — durch andre Kräfte will  
 Das Herrliche der Menschheit sich erhalten.

2420

(Er legt seine Hand auf das Haupt des Kindes, das vor ihm auf den  
 Knieen liegt.)

Aus diesem Haupte, wo der Apfel lag,  
 Wird euch die neue, bessere Freiheit grünen;  
 Das Alte stürzt, es ändert sich die Zeit,  
 Und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen.

2425

Stauffacher (zu Walther Fürst).

Seht, welcher Glanz sich um sein Aug' ergießt!

Das ist nicht das Erlöschen der Natur,  
Das ist der Strahl schon eines neuen Lebens,

Attinghausen.

Der Adel steigt von seinen alten Burgen 2430

Und schwört den Städten seinen Bürgereid;

Im Aechtland schon, im Thurgau hat's begonnen,

Die edle Bern erhebt ihr herrschend Haupt,

Freiburg ist eine sichere Burg der Freien,

Die rege Zürich waffnet ihre Zünfte 2435

Zum kriegerischen Heer — es bricht die Macht

Der Könige sich an ihren ew'gen Wällen —

(Er spricht das Folgende mit dem Ton eines Sehers — seine Rede steigt bis zur Begeisterung.)

Die Fürsten seh' ich und die edeln Herrn

In Harnischen herangezogen kommen,

Ein harmlos Volk von Hirten zu bekriegen. 2440

Auf Tod und Leben wird gekämpft, und herrlich

Wird mancher Paß durch blutige Entscheidung.

Der Landmann stürzt sich mit der nackten Brust,

Ein freies Opfer, in die Schar der Lanzen!

Er bricht sie, und des Adels Blüte fällt, 2445

Es hebt die Freiheit fliegend ihre Fahne.

(Walther Fürst und Stauffachers Hände fassend.)

Drum haltet fest zusammen — fest und ewig —

Kein Ort der Freiheit sei dem andern fremd —

Hochwachten stellet aus auf euren Bergen,

Daß sich der Bund zum Bunde rasch versammle — 2450

Seid einig — einig — einig —

(Er fällt in das Rissen zurück — seine Hände halten entseelt noch die andern gefaßt. Fürst und Stauffacher betrachten ihn noch eine Zeit lang schweigend; dann treten sie hinweg, jeder seinem Schmerz überlassen. Unterdessen sind die Snenchte Hill hereingedrungen, sie nähern sich mit Zeichen eines stillern oder heftigern Schmerzens, einige knien bei ihm nieder und weinen auf seine Hand; während dieser stummen Scene wird die Burgglocke geläutet.)

Rudenz zu den Vorigen.

Rudenz (rasch eintretend).

Lebt er? O saget, kann er mich noch hören?

Walthyr Fürst (deutet hin mit weggewandtem Gesicht).

Ihr seid jetzt unser Lehensherr und Schirmher,  
Und dieses Schloß hat einen andern Namen.

Rudenz (erblickt den Leichnam und sieht von heftigem Schmerz ergriffen).

O gült'ger Gott! — Kommt meine Neu' zu spät? 2455  
Kommt' er nicht wen'ge Pulse länger leben,  
Um mein geändert Herz zu sehn?  
Verachtet hab' ich seine treue Stimme,  
Da er noch wandelte im Licht — Er ist  
Dahin, ist fort auf immerdar und läßt mir 2460  
Die schwere, unbezahlte Schuld! — O, saget!  
Schied er dahin im Unmut gegen mich?

Stauffacher.

Er hörte sterbend noch, was ihr gethan,  
Und segnete den Mut, mit dem ihr sprach!

Rudenz (niet an dem Toten nieder).

Ja, heil'ge Reste eines teuren Mannes! 2465  
Entseelter Leichnam! hier gelob' ich dir's  
In deine kalte Totenhand — Zerrissen  
Hab' ich auf ewig alle fremden Bande;  
Zurückgegeben bin ich meinem Volk,  
Ein Schweizer bin ich, und ich will es sein 2470  
Von ganzer Seele — — (Aufstehend.)

Trauert um den Freund,

Den Vater aller, doch verzaget nicht!  
Nicht bloß sein Erbe ist mir zugefallen,  
Es steigt sein Herz, sein Geist auf mich herab,  
Und leisten soll euch meine frische Jugend, 2475

Was euch sein greises Alter schuldig blieb;  
 — Ehrwürd'ger Vater, gebt mir eure Hand!  
 Gebt mir die eurige! Melchthal, auch ihr!  
 Bedenkt euch nicht! O, wendet euch nicht weg!  
 Empfanget meinen Schwur und mein Gelübde.

2480

Walther Fürst.

Gebt ihm die Hand. Sein wiederkehrend Herz  
 Verdient Vertrauen.

Melchthal.

Ihr habt den Landmann nichts geächtet.  
 Sprecht, wessen soll man sich zu euch versehen?

Rudenz.

O, denket nicht des Irrtums meiner Jugend!

Stauffacher (zu Melchthal).

Seid einig, war das letzte Wort des Vaters.  
 Gedenket dessen!

2485

Melchthal.

Hier ist meine Hand!

Des Bauern Handschlag, edler Herr, ist auch  
 Ein Manneswort! Was ist der Ritter ohne uns?  
 Und unser Stand ist älter, als der eure.

Rudenz.

Ich ehr' ihn, und mein Schwert soll ihn beschützen.

2490

Melchthal.

Der Arm, Herr Freiherr, der die harte Erde  
 Sich unterwirft und ihren Schoß befruchtet,  
 Kann auch des Mannes Brust beschützen.

Rudenz.

Ihr

Sollt meine Brust, ich will die eure schützen,



So sind wir einer durch den andern stark. 2495  
 — Doch wozu reden, da das Vaterland  
 Ein Raub noch ist der fremden Tyrannei?  
 Wenn erst der Boden rein ist von dem Feind,  
 Dann wollen wir's in Frieden schon vergleichen.

(Nachdem er einen Augenblick inne gehalten.)

Ihr schweigt? Ihr habt mir nichts zu sagen? Wie? 2500  
 Verdien' ich's noch nicht, daß ihr mir vertraut?  
 So muß ich wider euren Willen mich  
 In das Geheimnis eures Bundes drängen.  
 — Ihr habt getagt — geschworen auf dem Rütli —  
 Ich weiß — weiß alles, was ihr dort verhandelt, 2505  
 Und, was mir nicht von euch vertrauet ward,  
 Ich hab's bewahrt gleichwie ein heilig Pfand.  
 Nie war ich meines Landes Feind, glaubt mir,  
 Und niemals hätt' ich gegen euch gehandelt.  
 — Doch übel thatet ihr, es zu verschieben; 2510  
 Die Stunde dringt, und rascher That bedarfs —  
 Der Tell ward schon das Opfer eures Säumens —

Stauffacher.

Das Christfest abzuwarten, schwuren wir.

Ruden;

Ich war nicht dort, ich hab' nicht mitgeschworen.  
 Wartet ihr ab, ich handle.

Melchthal.

Was? Ihr wolltet —

2515

Ruden;

Des Landes Vätern zähl' ich mich jetzt bei,  
 Und meine erste Pflicht ist, euch zu schützen.

Walther Fürst.

Der Erde diesen teuren Staub zu geben,  
 Ist eure nächste Pflicht und heiligste.

Rudenz.

Wenn wir das Land befreit, dann legen wir  
 Den frischen Kranz des Siegs ihm auf die Bahre. 2520  
 O Freunde! eure Sache nicht allein,  
 Ich habe meine eigne auszufechten  
 Mit dem Tyrannen — Hört und wißt! Verschwunden  
 Ist meine Bertha, heimlich weggeraubt, 2525  
 Mit kecker Frevelthat aus unsrer Mitte!

Stauffacher.

Solcher Gewaltthat hätte der Tyrann  
 Wider die freie Edle sich verwogen?

Rudenz.

O meine Freunde! euch versprach ich Hilfe,  
 Und ich zuerst muß sie von euch erflehn. 2530  
 Geraubt, entrissen ist mir die Geliebte.  
 Wer weiß, wo sie der Wütende verbirgt,  
 Welcher Gewalt sie frevelnd sich erkühnert,  
 Ihr Herz zu zwingen zum verhaßten Band!  
 Verlaßt mich nicht, o, helft mir sie erretten — 2535  
 Sie liebt euch! o, sie hat's verdient ums Land,  
 Daß alle Arme sich für sie bewaffnen —

Walther Fürst.

Was wollt ihr unternehmen?

Rudenz.

Weiß ich's? Ach!

In dieser Nacht, die ihr Geschick umhüllt,  
 In dieses Zweifels ungeheurer Angst, 2540  
 Wo ich nichts Festes zu erfassen weiß,  
 Ist mir nur dieses in der Seele klar:  
 Unter den Trümmern der Tyrannenmacht  
 Allein kann sie hervorgegraben werden;

Die Festen alle müssen wir bezwingen,  
Ob wir vielleicht in ihren Kerker dringen. 2545

Melchthal.

Kommt, führt uns an! Wir folgen euch. Warum  
Bis morgen sparen, was wir heut' vermögen?  
Frei war der Tell, als wir im Rüttli schwuren,  
Das Ungeheure war noch nicht geschehen. 2550  
Es bringt die Zeit ein anderes Gesetz;  
Wer ist so feig, der jetzt noch könnte zagen!

Ruden; (zu Stauffacher und Walther Fürst).

Indes bewaffnet und zum Werk bereit,  
Erwartet ihr der Berge Feuerzeichen;  
Denn, schneller als ein Botensiegel fliegt, 2555  
Soll euch die Botschaft unsers Siegs erreichen,  
Und seht ihr leuchten die willkommenen Flammen,  
Dann auf die Feinde stürzt wie Wetters Strahl  
Und brecht den Bau der Tyrannei zusammen! (Gehen ab).

Dritte Scene.

Die hohle Gasse bei Rütznacht.

Man steigt von hinten zwischen Felsen hinunter, und die Wanderer werden, ehe sie auf der Scene erscheinen, schon von der Höhe gesehen. Felsen umschließen die ganze Scene; auf einem der vordersten ist ein Vorsprung mit Gesträuch bewachsen.

Tell (tritt auf mit der Armbrust.)

Durch diese hohle Gasse muß er kommen; 2560  
Es führt kein andrer Weg nach Rütznacht — Hier  
Vollend' ich's. — Die Gelegenheit ist günstig.  
Dort der Holunderstrauch verbirgt mich ihm,  
Von dort herab kann ihn mein Pfeil erlangen;  
Des Weges Enge wehret den Verfolgern. 2565

Mach' deine Rechnung mit dem Himmel, Vogt,  
Fort mußt du, deine Uhr ist abgelaufen.

Ich lebte still und harmlos — das Geschöpf  
War auf des Waldes Tiere nur gerichtet,  
Meine Gedanken waren rein von Mord — 2570  
Du hast aus meinem Frieden mich heraus  
Geschreckt; in gärend Drachengift hast du  
Die Milch der frommen Denkart mir verwandelt;  
Zum Ungeheuren hast du mich gewöhnt —  
Wer sich des Kindes Haupt zum Ziele setzte, 2575  
Der kann auch treffen in das Herz des Feinds.

Die armen Kindlein, die unschuldigen,  
Das treue Weib muß ich vor deiner Wut  
Beschützen, Landvogt! — Da, als ich den Bogenstrang  
Anzog — als mir die Hand erzitterte — 2580  
Als du mit grausam teuflischer Lust  
Mich zwängst, aufs Haupt des Kindes anzulegen —  
Als ich ohnmächtig flehend rang vor dir,  
Damals gelobt' ich mir in meinem Innern  
Mit furchtbarm Eidschwur, den nur Gott gehört, 2585  
Daß meines nächsten Schusses erstes Ziel  
Dein Herz sein sollte — Was ich mir gelobt.  
In jenes Augenblickes Höllequalen,  
Ist eine heil'ge Schuld — ich will sie zahlen.

Du bist mein Herr und meines Kaisers Vogt; 2590  
Doch nicht der Kaiser hätte sich erlaubt,  
Was du — Er sandte dich in diese Lande,  
Um Recht zu sprechen — strenges, denn er zürnet —  
Doch nicht, um mit der mörderischen Lust  
Dich jedes Greuels straflos zu erfreuen; 2595  
Es lebt ein Gott, zu strafen und zu rächen.



Komm du hervor, du Bringer bitterer Schmerzen,  
 Mein teures Kleinod jetzt, mein höchster Schatz —  
 Ein Ziel will ich dir geben, das bis jetzt  
 Der frommen Bitte undurchdringlich war — 2600  
 Doch dir soll es nicht widerstehn — Und du,  
 Vertraute Bogensehne, die so oft  
 Mir treu gedient hat in der Freude Spielen,  
 Verlaß mich nicht im fürchterlichen Ernst!  
 Nur jetzt noch halte fest, du treuer Strang, 2605  
 Der mir so oft den herben Pfeil besflügelt —  
 Entränn' er jezo kraftlos meinen Händen,  
 Ich habe keinen zweiten zu versenden.

(Wanderer gehen über die Scene.)

Auf dieser Bank von Stein will ich mich setzen,  
 Dem Wanderer zur kurzen Ruh' bereitet — 2610  
 Denn hier ist keine Heimat — Jeder treibt  
 Sich an dem andern rasch und fremd vorüber/  
 Und fraget nicht nach seinem Schmerz — Hier geht  
 Der sorgenvolle Kaufmann und der leicht  
 Geschürzte Pilger — der andächt'ge Mönch, 2615  
 Der düstre Räuber und der heitre Spielmann,  
 Der Säumer mit dem schwerbeladenen Ross,  
 Der ferne herkommt von der Menschen Ländern,  
 Denn jede Straße führt ans End' der Welt.  
 Sie alle ziehen ihres Weges fort 2620  
 An ihr Geschäft — und meines ist der Mord! (Setzt sich.)

Sonst, wenn der Vater auszog, liebe Kinder,  
 Da war ein Freuen, wenn er wiederkam;  
 Denn niemals kehrt' er heim, er bracht' euch etwas,  
 War's eine schöne Alpenblume, war's 2625  
 Ein feltner Vogel oder Ammonshorn,  
 Wie es der Wandrer findet auf den Bergen —

Jetzt geht er einem andern Weidwerk nach,  
Am wilden Weg sitzt er mit Mordgedanken;  
Des Feindes Leben ist's, worauf er lauert. 2630

— Und doch an euch nur denkt er, liebe Kinder,  
Auch jetzt — euch zu verteid'gen, eure holde Unschuld  
Zu schützen vor der Rache des Tyrannen,  
Will er zum Morde jetzt den Bogen spannen. (Steht auf.)

Ich laure auf ein edles Wild — Läßt sich's 2635

Der Jäger nicht verdrießen, tagelang  
Umherzustreifen in des Winters Strenge,  
Von Fels zu Fels den Wagesprung zu thun,  
Hinan zu klettern an den glatten Wänden,  
Wo er sich anleimt mit dem eignen Blut, 2640

— Um ein armselig Grattier zu erjagen.  
Hier gilt es einen köstlicheren Preis,  
Das Herz des Todfeinds, der mich will verderben.

(Man hört von ferne eine heitere Musik, welche sich nähert.)

Mein ganzes Leben lang hab' ich den Bogen  
Gehandhabt, mich geübt nach Schützenregel; 2645

Ich habe oft geschossen in das Schwarze  
Und manchen schönen Preis mir heimgebracht  
Vom Freudenschießen — Aber heute will ich  
Den Meisterschuß thun und das Beste mir  
Im ganzen Umkreis des Gebirgs gewinnen. 2650

(Eine Hochzeit zieht über die Scene und durch den Hohlweg hinauf. Zell  
betrachtet sie, auf seinen Bogen gelehnt; Stüssi, der Furschütz, gesellt  
sich zu ihm.)

Stüssi.

Das ist der Klostermei'r von Mörlichachen,  
Der hier den Brautlauf hält — ein reicher Mann,  
Er hat wohl zehen Senten auf den Alpen.  
Die Braut holt er jetzt ab zu Imisee,



Und diese Nacht wird hoch geschwelgt zu Rüsfnacht. 2655  
Kommt mit! 's ist jeder Biedermann geladen.

Tell.

Ein ernster Gast stimmt nicht zum Hochzeitshaus.

Stüssi.

Drückt euch ein Kummer, werft ihn frisch vom Herzen!  
Nehmt mit, was kommt; die Zeiten sind jetzt schwer;  
Drum muß der Mensch die Freude leicht ergreifen. 2660  
Hier wird gefreit und anderswo begraben.

Tell.

Und oft kommt gar das eine zu dem andern.

Stüssi.

So geht die Welt nun. Es giebt allerwegen  
Unglücks genug — Ein Ruffi ist gegangen  
Im Glarner Land und eine ganze Seite 2665  
Vom Glärnisch eingesunken.

Tell.

Wanken auch

Die Berge selbst? Es steht nichts fest auf Erden.

Stüssi.

Auch anderswo vernimmt man Wunderdinge.  
Da sprach ich einen, der von Baden kam.  
Ein Ritter wollte zu dem König reiten, 2670  
Und unterwegs begegnet ihm ein Schwarm  
Von Hornissen; die fallen auf sein Roß,  
Daß es vor Marter tot zu Boden sinkt,  
Und er zu Fuße ankommt bei dem König.

Tell.

Dem Schwachen ist sein Stachel auch gegeben. 2675

(Armgard kommt mit mehreren Kindern und stellt sich an den Eingang  
des Hohlwegs.)

Stüffi.

Man deutet's auf ein großes Landesunglück,  
Auf schwere Thaten wider die Natur.

Tell.

Dergleichen Thaten bringet jeder Tag;  
Kein Wunderzeichen braucht sie zu verkünden.

Stüffi.

Ja, wohl dem, der sein Feld bestellt in Ruh'  
Und ungekränkt daheim sitzt bei den Seinen.

2680

Tell.

Es kann der Frömmste nicht im Frieden bleiben,  
Wenn es dem bösen Nachbar nicht gefällt.

(T e II sieht oft mit unruhiger Erwartung nach der Höhe des Berges.)

Stüffi.

Gehabt euch wohl! Ihr wartet hier auf jemand?

Tell.

Das thur' ich.

Stüffi.

Frohe Heimkehr zu den Euren!

2685

— Ihr seid aus Uri? Unser gnäd'ger Herr,  
Der Landvogt, wird noch heut' von dort erwartet.

Wanderer (kommt).

Den Vogt erwartet heut' nicht mehr. Die Wasser  
Sind ausgetreten von dem großen Regen,  
Und alle Brücken hat der Strom zerrissen. (T e II steht auf.) 2690

Armgard (kommt davorwärts).

Der Landvogt kommt nicht?

Stüffi.

Sucht ihr was an ihn?



Armgard.

Ach freilich!

Stüssi.

Warum stellet ihr euch denn  
In dieser hohlen Gass' ihm in den Weg?

Armgard.

Hier weicht er mir nicht aus, er muß mich hören.

Friesshardt (kommt eifertig den Hohlweg herab und ruft in die Scene).

Man fahre aus dem Weg — Mein gnäd'ger Herr, 2695  
Der Landvogt, kommt dicht hinter mir geritten. (Zell  
geht ab.)

Armgard (lebhaft).

Der Landvogt kommt!

(Sie geht mit ihren Kindern nach der vorderen Scene. Geßler und  
Rudolf der Sarraz zeigen sich zu Pferd auf der Höhe des Wegs.)

Stüssi (zum Friesshardt).

Wie kamt ihr durch das Wasser  
Da doch der Strom die Brücken fortgeführt?

Friesshardt.

Wir haben mit dem See gefochten, Freund,  
Und fürchten uns vor keinem Alpenwasser. 2700

Stüssi.

Ihr wart zu Schiff in dem gewalt'gen Sturm?

Friesshardt.

Das waren wir. Mein Lebtag denk' ich dran —

Stüssi.

O, bleibt, erzählt!

Friesshardt.

Laßt mich, ich muß voraus,  
Den Landvogt muß ich in der Burg verkünden. (Ab.)

Stüffi.

Wär'n gute Leute auf dem Schiff gewesen,  
 In Grund gesunken wär's mit Mann und Maus;  
 Dem Volk kann weder Wasser bei noch Feuer. (Er sieht  
 sich um.)  
 Wo kam der Weidmann hin, mit dem ich sprach? (Geht ab.)  
 (Gessler und Rudolf der Harnas zu Pferd.)

Gessler.

Sagt, was ihr wollt, ich bin des Kaisers Diener  
 Und muß drauf denken, wie ich ihm gefalle. 2710  
 Er hat mich nicht ins Land geschickt, dem Volk  
 Zu schmeicheln und ihm sanft zu thun — Gehorsam  
 Erwartet er; der Streit ist, ob der Bauer  
 Soll Herr sein in dem Lande oder der Kaiser.

Armgard.

Jetzt ist der Augenblick! Jetzt bring' ich's an! 2715  
 (Nähert sich furchtsam.)

Gessler.

Ich hab' den Hut nicht aufgesteckt zu Altorf  
 Des Scherzes wegen, oder um die Herzen  
 Des Volks zu prüfen; diese kenn' ich längst.  
 Ich hab' ihn aufgesteckt, daß sie den Nacken  
 Mir lernen beugen, den sie aufrecht tragen — 2720  
 Das Unbequeme hab' ich hingepflanzt  
 Auf ihren Weg, wo sie vorbeigehn müssen,  
 Daß sie drauf stoßen mit dem Aug' und sich  
 Erinnern ihres Herrn, den sie vergessen.

Rudolf der Harnas.

Das Volk hat aber doch gewisse Rechte — 2725

Gessler.

Die abzuwägen, ist jetzt keine Zeit!



— Weitschicht'ge Dinge sind im Werf und Werden;  
 Das Kaiserhaus will wachsen; was der Vater  
 Glorreich begonnen, will der Sohn vollenden,  
 Dies kleine Volk ist uns ein Stein im Weg —  
 So oder so — es muß sich unterwerfen.

2730

(Sie wollen vorüber. Die Frau wirft sich vor dem Landvogt nieder.)

Armgard.

Barmherzigkeit, Herr Landvogt! Gnade! Gnade!

Gefler.

Was bringt ihr euch auf offner Straße mir  
 In Weg? — Zurück!

Armgard.

Mein Mann liegt im Gefängnis;  
 Die armen Waisen schrei'n nach Brot — Habt Mitleid,  
 Gestrenger Herr, mit unserm großen Elend!

2735

Rudolf der Haxras.

Wer seid ihr? Wer ist euer Mann?

Armgard.

Ein armer

Wildheuer, guter Herr, vom Rigiberge,  
 Der überm Abgrund weg das freie Gras  
 Abmähet von den schroffen Felsenwänden,  
 Wohin das Vieh sich nicht getraut zu steigen —

2740

Rudolf der Haxras (zum Landvogt).

Bei Gott, ein elend und erbärmlich Leben!  
 Ich bitt' euch, gebt ihn los, den armen Mann!  
 Was er auch Schweres mag verschuldet haben,  
 Strafe genug ist sein entsegllich Handwerk. (Zu der Frau.)  
 Euch soll Recht werden — Drinnen auf der Burg  
 Nennt eure Bitte — hier ist nicht der Ort.

2745

Armgard.

Nein, nein, ich weiche nicht von diesem Platz,  
 Bis mir der Bogt den Mann zurückgegeben!  
 Schon in den sechsten Mond liegt er im Turm  
 Und harret auf den Richterspruch vergebens. 2750

Gesler.

Weib, wollt ihr mir Gewalt anthun? Hinweg!

Armgard.

Gerechtigkeit, Landvogt! Du bist der Richter  
 Im Lande an des Kaisers Statt und Gottes.  
 Thu' deine Pflicht! So du Gerechtigkeit  
 Vom Himmel hoffest, so erzeig' sie uns! 2755

Gesler.

Fort! Schafft das freche Volk mir aus den Augen!

Armgard (greift in die Bügel des Pferdes).

Nein, nein, ich habe nichts mehr zu verlieren.  
 — Du kommst nicht von der Stelle, Bogt, bis du  
 Mir Recht gesprochen — Falte deine Stirne,  
 Rolle die Augen, wie du willst — Wir sind  
 So grenzenlos unglücklich, daß wir nichts  
 Nach deinem Zorn mehr fragen. — 2760

Gesler.

Weib, mach' Platz,  
 Oder mein Roß geht über dich hinweg.

Armgard.

Laß es über mich dahin gehn — Da —

(Sie reißt ihre Kinder zu Boden und wirft sich mit ihnen ihm in den Weg.)

Hier lieg' ich 2765

Mit meinen Kindern — Laß die armen Waisen  
 Von deines Pferdes Huf zertreten werden!  
 Es ist das Ärgste nicht, was du gethan —



## Rudolf der Harras.

Weib, seid ihr rasend?

Armgard (heftiger fortfahrend).

Tratest du doch längst

Das Land des Kaisers unter deine Füße!

2770

— O, ich bin nur ein Weib! Wär' ich ein Mann,

Ich wüßte wohl was Besseres, als hier

Im Staub zu liegen —

(Man hört die vorige Musik wieder auf der Höhe des Wegs, aber gedämpft.)

Gesler.

Wo sind meine Knechte?

Man reiße sie von hinnen, oder ich

Vergesse mich und thue, was mich reuet.

2775

Rudolf der Harras.

Die Knechte können nicht hindurch, o Herr,

Der Hohlweg ist gesperrt durch eine Hochzeit.

Gesler.

Ein allzu milber Herrscher bin ich noch

Gegen dies Volk — die Zungen sind noch frei,

Es ist noch nicht ganz, wie es soll, gebändigt —

2780

Doch es soll anders werden, ich gelob' es:

Ich will ihn brechen, diesen starren Sinn,

Den festen Geist der Freiheit will ich beugen,

Ein neu Gesetz will ich in diesen Landen

Verkündigen — Ich will —

(Ein Pfeil durchbohrt ihn; er fährt mit der Hand ans Herz und will sinken.  
Mit matter Stimme:)

Gott sei mir gnädig!

2785

Rudolf der Harras.

Herr Landvogt — Gott! Was ist das? Woher kam das?

Armgard (auffahrend).

Mord! Mord! Er taumelt, sinkt! Er ist getroffen!  
Mitten ins Herz hat ihn der Pfeil getroffen!

Rudolf der Harras (springt vom Pferde).

Welch gräßliches Ereignis — Gott — Herr Ritter —  
Ruft die Erbarmung Gottes an! Ihr seid  
Ein Mann des Todes!

2790

Gesler.

Das ist Tell's Geschöß.

(Ist vom Pferd herab dem Rudolf Harras in den Arm gleitet und  
wird auf der Bank niedergelassen.)

Tell (erscheint oben auf der Höhe des Felsen).

Du kennst den Schützen, suche keinen andern!  
Frei sind die Hütten, sicher ist die Unschuld  
Vor dir, du wirst dem Lande nicht mehr schaden.

(Verschwindet von der Höhe. Wolf stürzt herein.)

Stüffi (voran).

Was giebt es hier? Was hat sich zugetragen?

2795

Armgard.

Der Landvogt ist von einem Pfeil durchschossen.

Volk (im Hereinstürzen).

Wer ist erschossen?

(Indem die Vordersten von dem Brautgug auf die Scene kommen, sind die  
Hintersten noch auf der Höhe, und die Musik geht fort.)

Rudolf der Harras.

Er verblutet sich.

Fort, schaffet Hilfe! Setzt dem Mörder nach!  
— Verlorner Mann, so muß es mit dir enden;  
Doch meine Warnung wolltest du nicht hören!

2800

Stüffi.

Bei Gott, da liegt er bleich und ohne Leben.



## Viele Stimmen.

Wer hat die That gethan?

Rudolf der Harras.

Rast dieses Volk,  
Daß es dem Mord Musik macht? Laßt sie schweigen!

(Musik bricht plötzlich ab, es kommt noch mehr Volk nach.)

Herr Landvogt, redet, wenn ihr könnt — Habt ihr  
Mir nichts mehr zu vertrauen?

(Seßler giebt Zeichen mit der Hand, die er mit Gestigkeit wiederholt, da  
sie nicht gleich verstanden werden.)

Wo soll ich hin?

2805

— Nach Rißnacht? Ich versteh' euch nicht — O, werdet  
Nicht ungeduldig — Laßt das Irdische,  
Denkt jetzt, euch mit dem Himmel zu versöhnen.

(Die ganze Hochzeitgesellschaft umsieht den Sterbenden mit einem fühllosen  
Grausen.)

Stüßi.

Sieh, wie er bleich wird — Jetzt, jetzt tritt der Tod  
Ihm an das Herz — die Augen sind gebrochen.

2810

Armigard (hebt ein Kind empor).

Seht, Kinder, wie ein Wüterich verschaidet!

Rudolf der Harras.

Wahnsinn'ge Weiber, habt ihr kein Gefühl,  
Daß ihr den Blick an diesem Schrecknis weidet?  
— Helft — leget Hand an — Steht mir niemand bei,  
Den Schmerzenspfeil ihm aus der Brust zu ziehn?

2815

Weiber (treten zurück).

Wir ihn berühren, welchen Gott geschlagen!

Rudolf der Harras.

Fluch treff' euch und Verdammnis!

(Zieht das Schwert.)

Hüßli (fällt ihm in den Arm).

Wagt es, Herr!

Eu'r Walten hat ein Ende. Der Tyrann  
Des Landes ist gefallen. Wir erdulden  
Keine Gewalt mehr. Wir sind freie Menschen. 2820

Alle (tumultuarisch):

Das Land ist frei!

Rudolf der Harras.

Ist es dahin gekommen?

Endet die Furcht so schnell und der Gehorsam?

(Zu den Waffentochten, die hereindringen.)

Ihr seht die grausenvolle That des Mords,  
Die hier geschehen — Hilfe ist umsonst —  
Bergeblith ist's, dem Mörder nachzusetzen. 2825

Uns drängen andre Sorgen — Auf, nach Rißnacht,  
Daß wir dem Kaiser seine Feste retten!

Denn aufgelöst in diesem Augenblick  
Sind aller Ordnung, aller Pflichten Bande,  
Und keines Mannes Treu' ist zu vertrauen. 2830

(Indem er mit den Waffentochten abgeht, erscheinen sechs barm-  
herzige Brüder.)

Armgard.

Platz! Platz! Da kommen die barmherz'gen Brüder.

Hüßli.

Das Opfer liegt — die Raben steigen nieder.  
Barmherzige Brüder (schließen einen Halbkreis um den Toten und  
singen in tiefem Ton).

Rasch tritt der Tod den Menschen an,

Es ist ihm keine Frist gegeben;

Es stürzt ihn mitten in der Bahn, 2835

Es reißt ihn fort vom vollen Leben.

Bereitet oder nicht, zu gehen,

Er muß vor seinen Richter stehen!

(Indem die letzten Zeilen wiederholt werden, fällt der Vorhang.)



## Fünfter Aufzug.

## Erste Scene.

## Öffentlicher Platz bei Altorf.

Im Hintergrunde rechts die Feste Zwing Uri mit dem noch stehenden Baumgerüste, wie in der dritten Scene des ersten Aufzugs; links eine Aussicht in viele Berge hinein, auf welchen allen Signalfener brennen. Es ist eben Tagesanbruch, Glocken ertönen aus verschiedenen Fernen.

Kuodi, Ruoni, Werni, Meißer Steinmeh und viele andere Handleute, auch Weiber und Kinder.

Kuodi.

Seht ihr die Feuersignale auf den Bergen?

Steinmeh.

Hört ihr die Glocken drüben überm Wald?

2840

Kuodi.

Die Feinde sind verjagt.

Steinmeh.

Die Burgen sind erobert.

Kuodi.

Und wir im Lande Uri dulden noch  
Auf unserm Boden das Tyrannenschloß?  
Sind wir die letzten, die sich frei erklären?

Steinmeh.

Das Joch soll stehen, das uns zwingen wollte?  
Auf, reißt es nieder!

2845

Alle.

Nieder! nieder! nieder!

Kuodi.

Wo ist der Stier von Uri?

Stier von Uri.

Hier. Was soll ich?

**Kuodi.**

Steigt auf, die Hochwacht, bläst in euer Horn,  
Daß es weitschmetternd in die Berge schalle  
Und, jedes Echo in den Felsenklüften  
Aufweckend, schnell die Männer des Gebirgs  
Zusammenrufe.

2850

(Stier von Uri geht ab. Walthar Fürst kommt.)

**Walthar Fürst.**

Haltet, Freunde! Haltet!  
Noch fehlt uns Kunde, was in Unterwalden  
Und Schwyz geschehen. Laßt uns Boten erst  
Erwarten!

**Kuodi.**

Was erwarten? Der Tyrann  
Ist tot, der Tag der Freiheit ist erschienen.

2855

**Steinmeh.**

Ist's nicht genug an diesen flammenden Boten,  
Die rings herum auf allen Bergen leuchten?

**Kuodi.**

Kommt alle, kommt, legt Hand an, Männer und Weiber!  
Brecht das Gerüste! Sprengt die Bögen! Reißt  
Die Mauern ein! Kein Stein bleib' auf dem andern.

2860

**Steinmeh.**

Gefellen, kommt! Wir haben's aufgebaut,  
Wir wissen's zu zerstören.

**Alle.**

Kommt, reißt nieder!

(Sie stürzen sich von allen Seiten auf den Bau.)

**Walthar Fürst.**

Es ist im Lauf. Ich kann sie nicht mehr halten.

(Meiſthal und Baumgarten kommen.)



## Melchthal.

Was? Steht die Burg noch, und Schloß Sarnen liegt 2865  
In Asche, und der Roßberg ist gebrochen?

## Walther Fürst.

Seid ihr es, Melchthal? Bringt ihr uns die Freiheit?  
Sagt! Sind die Lande alle rein vom Feind?

## Melchthal (umarmt ihn).

Nein ist der Boden. Freut euch, alter Vater!  
In diesem Augenblicke, da wir reden, 2870  
Ist kein Tyrann mehr in der Schweizer Land.

## Walther Fürst.

(O, spricht, wie wurdet ihr der Burgen mächtig?)

## Melchthal.

Der Rudenz war es, der das Sarnner Schloß  
Mit mannlich kühner That gewann.  
Den Roßberg hatt' ich nachts zuvor erstiegen. 2875  
— Doch höret, was geschah. Als wir das Schloß,  
Vom Feind geleert, nun freudig angezündet,  
Die Flamme prasselnd schon zum Himmel schlug,  
Da stürzt der Diethelm, Geflers Bub, hervor  
Und ruft, daß die Bruneckerin verbrenne. 2880

## Walther Fürst.

Gerechter Gott!

(Man hört die Balken des Gerüstes stürzen.)

## Melchthal.

Sie war es selbst, war heimlich  
Hier eingeschlossen auf des Vogts Geheiß.  
Rasend erhob sich Rudenz — denn wir hörten  
Die Balken schon, die festen Pfosten stürzen  
Und aus dem Rauch hervor den Jammerruf 2885  
Der Unglückseligen.)

Walther Fürst.

Sie ist gerettet?

Melchthal.

Da galt Geschwindsein und Entschlossenheit!

— Wär' er nur unser Edelmann gewesen,

Wir hätten unser Leben wohl geliebt;

Doch er war unser Eidgenos, und Bertha

Ehrte das Volk — So setzten wir getrost

Das Leben dran und stürzten in das Feuer.

2890

Walther Fürst.

Sie ist gerettet?

Melchthal.

Sie ist's. Rudenz und ich,

Wir trugen sie selbender aus den Flammen,

Und hinter uns fiel krachend das Gebäll.

— Und jetzt, als sie gerettet sich erkannte,

Die Augen aufschlug zu dem Himmelslicht,

Jetzt stürzte mir der Freiherr an das Herz,

Und schweigend ward ein Bündnis jetzt beschworen,

Das, fest gehärtet in des Feuers Blut,

Bestehen wird in allen Schicksalsproben —

2895

2900

Walther Fürst.

Wo ist der Landenberg?

Melchthal.

Über den Brünig.

Nicht lag's an mir, daß er das Licht der Augen

Davontrug, der den Vater mir geblendet.

Nach jagt' ich ihm, erreicht' ihn auf der Flucht

Und riß ihn zu den Füßen meines Vaters.

Geschwungen über ihm war schon das Schwert;

Von der Barmherzigkeit des blinden Greises

2905





Erhielt er flehend das Geschenk des Lebens.  
 Urfehde schwur er, nie zurückzukehren;  
 Er wird sie halten; unsern Arm hat er  
 Gefühlt.

2910

Walther Fürst.

Wohl euch, daß ihr den reinen Sieg  
 Mit Blute nicht geschändet!

*Kinder* (eilen mit Trümmern des Gerüstes über die Scene).

Freiheit! Freiheit!

(Das Horn von Uri wird mit Macht geblasen.)

Walther Fürst.

Seht, welch ein Fest! Des Tages werden sich  
 Die Kinder spät als Greise noch erinnern.

2915

(Mädchen bringen den Hut auf einer Stange getragen; die ganze Scene  
 füllt sich mit Volk an.)

Kuodi.

Hier ist der Hut, dem wir uns beugen mußten.

Baumgarten.

Gebt uns Bescheid, was damit werden soll.

Walther Fürst.

Gott! Unter diesem Hute stand mein Enkel.

Mehrere Stimmen.

Zerstört das Denkmal der Tyrannenmacht!  
 Ins Feuer mit ihm!

Walther Fürst.

Nein, laßt ihn aufbewahren!  
 Der Tyranei muß er zum Werkzeug dienen,  
 Er soll der Freiheit ewig Zeichen sein!

2920

(Die Landleute, Männer, Weiber und Kinder stehen und sitzen auf den  
 Balken des zerbrochenen Gerüstes malerisch gruppiert in einem großen  
 Halbkreis umher.)

**Melchthal.**

So stehen wir nun fröhlich auf den Trümmern  
Der Tyrannei, und herrlich ist's erfüllt,  
Was wir im Rütli schwuren, Eidgenossen! 2925

**Walther Fürst.**

Das Werk ist angefangen, nicht vollendet.  
Jetzt ist uns Mut und feste Eintracht not;  
Denn, seid gewiß, nicht säumen wird der König,  
Den Tod zu rächen seines Vogts und den  
Vertriebenen mit Gewalt zurückzuführen. 2930

**Melchthal.**

Er zieh' heran mit seiner Heeresmacht!  
Ist aus dem Innern doch der Feind verjagt;  
Dem Feind von außen wollen wir begegnen.

**Kuodi.**

Nur wen'ge Pässe öffnen ihm das Land,  
Die wollen wir mit unsern Leibern decken. 2935

**Saumgarten.**

Wir sind vereinigt durch ein ewig Band,  
Und seine Heere sollen uns nicht schrecken!  
(Köffelmann und Stauffacher kommen.)

**Köffelmann (im Eintreten).**

Das sind des Himmels furchtbare Gerichte.

**Sandleute.**

Was giebt's?

**Köffelmann.**

In welchen Zeiten leben wir!

**Walther Fürst.**

Sagt an, was ist es? Ha, seid ihr's, Herr Werner? 2940  
Was bringt ihr uns?

Sandleute.

Was giebt's?

Rösselmann.

Hört und erstaunet!

Stauffacher.

Von einer großen Furcht sind wir befreit —

Rösselmann.

Der Kaiser ist ermordet.

Walther Fürst.

Gnäd'ger Gott!

(Sandleute machen einen Aufstand und umdrängen den Stauffacher.)

Alle.

Ermordet! Was! Der Kaiser! Hört! Der Kaiser!

Melchthal.

Nicht möglich! Woher kam euch diese Kunde?

2945

Stauffacher.

Es ist gewiß. Bei Bruck fiel König Albrecht  
Durch Mörders Hand — ein glaubenswerter Mann,  
Johannes Müller, bracht' es von Schaffhausen.

Walther Fürst.

Wer wagte solche grauenvolle That?

Stauffacher.

Sie wird noch grauenvoller durch den Thäter.  
Es war sein Neffe, seines Bruders Kind,  
Herzog Johann von Schwaben, der's vollbrachte.

2950

Melchthal.

Was trieb ihn zu der That des Vatermords?

Stauffacher.

Der Kaiser hielt das väterliche Erbe  
Dem ungeduldig Mahnenden zurück;

2955

Es hieß, er denf ihn ganz darum zu kürzen,  
 Mit einem Bischofshute ihn abzufinden.  
 Wie dem auch sei — der Jüngling öffnete  
 Der Waffenfreunde bösem Rat sein Ohr,  
 Und mit den edeln Herrn von Eschenbach,  
 Von Tegerfelden, von der Wart und Palm  
 Beschloß er, da er Recht nicht konnte finden,  
 Sich Rach' zu holen mit der eignen Hand.

2960

Walther Fürst.

O, sprecht, wie ward das Gräßliche vollendet?

Stauffacher.

Der König ritt herab vom Stein zu Baden,  
 Gen Rheinfeld, wo die Hofstatt war, zu ziehn,  
 Mit ihm die Fürsten Hans und Leopold  
 Und ein Gefolge hochgeborner Herren.  
 Und als sie kamen an die Reuß, wo man  
 Auf einer Fähre sich läßt übersetzen,  
 Da drängten sich die Mörder in das Schiff,  
 Daß sie den Kaiser vom Gefolge trennten.  
 Drauf, als der Fürst durch ein geädert Feld  
 Hinreitet — eine alte große Stadt  
 Soll drunter liegen aus der Heiden Zeit —  
 Die alte Feste Habsburg im Gesicht,  
 Wo seines Stammes Hoheit ausgegangen —  
 Stößt Herzog Hans den Dolch ihm in die Kehle,  
 Rudolf von Palm durchrennt ihn mit dem Speer,  
 Und Eschenbach zerspaltet ihm das Haupt,  
 Daß er heruntersinkt in seinem Blut,  
 Gemordet von den Seinen, auf dem Seinen.  
 Am andern Ufer sahen sie die That;  
 Doch, durch den Strom geschieden, konnten sie  
 Nur ein ohnmächtig Wehgeschrei erheben;

2965

2970

2975

2980

2985

Am Wege aber saß ein armes Weib,  
In ihrem Schoß verblutete der Kaiser.

Melchthal.

So hat er nur sein frühes Grab gegraben,  
Der unersättlich alles wollte haben!

Stauffacher.

Ein ungeheurer Schrecken ist im Land umher; 2990

Gesperrt sind alle Pässe des Gebirgs,

Jedweder Stand verwahret seine Grenzen;

Die alte Zürich selbst schloß ihre Thore,

Die dreißig Jahr' lang offen standen, zu,

Die Mörder fürchtend und noch mehr — die Rächer. 2995

Denn, mit des Bannes Fluch bewaffnet, kommt

Der Ungarn Königin, die strenge Agnes,

Die nicht die Milde kennet ihres zarten

Geschlechts, des Vaters königliches Blut

Zu rächen an der Mörder ganzem Stamm, 3000

An ihren Knechten, Kindern, Kindeskindern,

Ja, an den Steinen ihrer Schlösser selbst.

Geschworen hat sie, ganze Zeugungen

Hinabzusenden in des Vaters Grab,

In Blut sich wie in Maientau zu baden. 3005

Melchthal.

Weiß man, wo sich die Mörder hingeflüchtet?

Stauffacher.

Sie flohen alsbald nach vollbrachter That

Auf fünf verschiednen Straßen auseinander

Und trennten sich, um nie sich mehr zu sehn —

Herzog Johann soll irren im Gebirge. 3010

Walther Fürst.

So trägt die Unthat ihnen keine Frucht!

Rache trägt keine Frucht! Sich selbst ist sie  
Die fürchterliche Nahrung, ihr Genuß  
Ist Mord, und ihre Sättigung das Grausen.

Stauffacher.

Den Mördern bringt die Unthat nicht Gewinn; 3015

Wir aber brechen mit der reinen Hand  
Des blut'gen Frevels segenvolle Frucht.

Denn einer großen Furcht sind wir entledigt;  
Gefallen ist der Freiheit größter Feind,  
Und wie verlautet, wird das Scepter gehn 3020

Aus Habsburgs Haus zu einem andern Stamm,  
Das Reich will seine Wahlfreiheit behaupten,

Walther Fürst und mehrere.

Bernahmt ihr was?

Stauffacher.

Der Graf von Luxemburg  
Ist von den mehrsten Stimmen schon bezeichnet.

Walther Fürst.

Wohl uns, daß wir beim Reiche treu gehalten; 3025  
Jetzt ist zu hoffen auf Gerechtigkeit!

Stauffacher

Dem neuen Herrn thun tapfre Freunde not;  
Er wird uns schirmen gegen Östreichs Rache.

(Die Handleute umarmen einander.)

(Sigrift mit einem Reichsboten.)

Sigrift.

Hier sind des Landes würd'ge Oberhäupter.

Köffelmann und mehrere.

Sigrift, was giebt's?

Sigrift.

Ein Reichsbot' bringt dies Schreiben. 3030



Alle (zu Walther Fürst).

Erbrecht und leset!

Walther Fürst (liest).

„Den bescheiden Männern  
Von Uri, Schwyz und Unterwalden bietet  
Die Königin Elisabeth Gnad' und alles Gutes.“

Viele Stimmen.

Was will die Königin? Ihr Reich ist aus.

Walther Fürst (liest).

„In ihrem großen Schmerz und Witwenleid,  
Worein der blut'ge Hinterschneid ihres Herrn  
Die Königin versetzt, gedenkt sie noch  
Der alten Treu' und Lieb' der Schwyzlerlande.“

3035

Melchthal.

In ihrem Glück hat sie das nie gethan.

Köffelmann.

Still! Lasset hören!

3040

Walther Fürst (liest).

„Und sie versieht sich zu dem treuen Volk,  
Daß es gerechten Abscheu werde tragen  
Vor den verfluchten Thätern dieser That;  
Darum erwartet sie von den drei Landen,  
Daß sie den Mördern nimmer Vorschub thun,  
Vielmehr getreulich dazu helfen werden,  
Sie auszuliefern in des Rächers Hand,  
Der Lieb' gedenkend und der alten Gunst,  
Die sie von Rudolfs Fürstenhaus empfangen.“

3045

(Zeichen des Unwillens unter den Landleuten.)

Viele Stimmen.

Der Lieb' und Gunst!

3050

## Stauffacher.

Wir haben Gunst empfangen von dem Vater;  
 Doch wessen rühmen wir uns von dem Sohn?  
 Hat er den Brief der Freiheit uns bestätigt,  
 Wie vor ihm alle Kaiser doch gethan?  
 Hat er gerichtet nach gerechtem Spruch 3055  
 Und der bedrängten Unschuld Schutz verliehn?  
 Hat er auch nur die Boten wollen hören,  
 Die wir in unsrer Angst zu ihm gesendet?  
 Nicht eins von diesem allen hat der König  
 An uns gethan, und hätten wir nicht selbst 3060  
 Uns Recht verschafft mit eigner mut'ger Hand,  
 Ihn rührte unsre Not nicht an — Ihm Dank?  
 Nicht Dank hat er gesät in diesen Thälern.  
 Er stand auf einem hohen Platz, er konnte  
 Ein Vater seiner Völker sein; doch ihm 3065  
 Gefiel es, nur zu sorgen für die Seinen.  
 Die er gemehrt hat, mögen um ihn weinen!

## Walther Fürst.

Wir wollen nicht frohlocken seines Falls,  
 Nicht des empfangnen Bösen jezt gedenken,  
 Fern sei's von uns! Doch, daß wir rächen sollten 3070  
 Des Königs Tod, der nie uns Gutes that,  
 Und die verfolgen, die uns nie betrübten,  
 Das ziemt uns nicht und will uns nicht gebühren.  
 Die Liebe will ein freies Opfer sein;  
 Der Tod entbindet von erzwungnen Pflichten,  
 — Ihm haben wir nichts weiter zu entrichten. 3075

## Melchthal.

Und weint die Königin in ihrer Kammer,  
 Und klagt ihr wilder Schmerz den Himmel an,  
 So seht ihr hier ein angstbefreites Volk



Zu eben diesem Himmel dankend stehen — 3080  
 Wer Thränen ernten will, muß Liebe säen.

(Reichsbote geht ab.)

Stauffacher (zu dem Volk).

Wo ist der Tell? Soll er allein uns fehlen,  
 Der unsrer Freiheit Stifter ist? Das Größte  
 Hat er gethan, das Härteste erduldet.  
 Kommt alle, kommt, nach seinem Haus zu wallen, 3085  
 Und rufet Heil dem Retter von uns allen!

(Alle gehen ab.)

## Zweite Scene.

### Tells Hausflur.

Ein Feuer brennt auf dem Herd. Die offen stehende Thüre zeigt ins Freie.

Hedwig, Walther und Wilhelm.

Hedwig.

Heut' kommt der Vater. Kinder, liebe Kinder!  
 Er lebt, ist frei, und wir sind frei und alles!  
 Und euer Vater ist's, der's Land gerettet.

Walther.

Und ich bin auch dabei gewesen, Mutter! 3090  
 Mich muß man auch mit nennen. Vaters Pfeil  
 Ging mir am Leben hart vorbei, und ich  
 Hab' nicht gezittert.

Hedwig (umarmt ihn).

Ja, du bist mir wieder  
 Gegeben! Zweimal hab' ich dich geboren!  
 Zweimal litt ich den Mutterschmerz um dich! 3095  
 Es ist vorbei — ich hab' euch beide, beide!  
 Und heute kommt der liebe Vater wieder!

(Ein Mönch erscheint an der Hausthüre.)

Wilhelm.

Sieh, Mutter, sieh — dort steht ein frommer Bruder;  
Gewiß wird er um eine Gabe flehn.

Hedwig.

Führ' ihn herein, damit wir ihn erquicken;  
Erühl's, daß er ins Freudenhaus gekommen.

3100

(Geht hinein und kommt bald mit einem Becher wieder.)

Wilhelm (zum Mönch).

Kommt, guter Mann! Die Mutter will euch laben.

Walther.

Kommt, ruht euch aus und geht gestärkt von dannen!

Mönch (sieht umherblickend mit zerstörten Zügen).

Wo bin ich? Saget an, in welchem Lande?

Walther.

Seid ihr verirret, daß ihr das nicht wißt?  
Ihr seid zu Bürglen, Herr, im Lande Uri,  
Wo man hineingeht in das Schächenthal.

3105

Mönch (zur Hedwig, welche zurückkommt).

Seid ihr allein? Ist euer Herr zu Hause?

Hedwig.

Ich erwart' ihn eben — doch was ist euch, Mann?  
(Ihr seht nicht aus, als ob ihr Gutes brächtet)  
— Wer ihr auch seid, ihr seid bedürftig, nehmt!

3110

(Reicht ihm den Becher.)

Mönch.

Wie auch mein lehzend Herz nach Labung schmachtet,  
Nichts rühr' ich an, bis ihr mir zugesagt —

Hedwig.

Berührt mein Kleid nicht, tretet mir nicht nah,  
Bleibt ferne stehn, wenn ich euch hören soll!

3115

Mönch.

Bei diesem Feuer, das hier gastlich lobert,  
Bei eurer Kinder teurem Haupt, das ich  
Umfasse — (Ergreift die Knaben).

Hedwig.

Mann, was sinnet ihr? Zurück  
Von meinen Kindern! — Ihr seid kein Mönch! Ihr seid  
Es nicht! Der Friede wohnt in diesem Kleide; 3120  
In euren Zügen wohnt der Friede nicht.

Mönch.

Ich bin der unglücklichste der Menschen.

Hedwig.

Das Unglück spricht gewaltig zu dem Herzen;  
Doch euer Blick schnürt mir das Innre zu.

Walther (auffspringend).

Mutter, der Vater! (Eilt hinaus.)

Hedwig.

O mein Gott!

(Will nach, zittert und hält sich an.)

Wilhelm (eilt nach).

Der Vater! 3125

Walther (draußen).

Da bist du wieder!

Wilhelm (draußen).

Vater, lieber Vater!

Tell (draußen).

Da bin ich wieder — Wo ist eure Mutter? (Treten herein.)

Walther.

Da steht sie an der Thür' und kann nicht weiter,  
So zittert sie vor Schrecken und vor Freude.

Tell.

O Hedwig! Hedwig! Mutter meiner Kinder!  
Gott hat geholfen — uns trennt kein Tyrann mehr. 3130

Hedwig (an seinem Halse).

O Tell! Tell! Welche Angst litt ich um dich!  
(Mönch wird aufmerksam.)

Tell.

Bergiß sie jetzt und lebe nur der Freude!  
Da bin ich wieder! Das ist meine Hütte!  
Ich stehe wieder auf dem Meinigen! 3135

Wilhelm.

Wo aber hast du deine Armbrust, Vater?  
Ich seh' sie nicht.

Tell.

Du wirst sie nie mehr sehn.  
An heil'ger Stätte ist sie aufbewahrt!  
Sie wird hinfort zu keiner Jagd mehr dienen.

Hedwig.

O Tell! Tell! (Tritt zurück, läßt seine Hand los.)

Tell.

Was erschreckt dich, liebes Weib? 3140

Hedwig.

Wie — wie kommst du mir wieder? — Diese Hand  
— Darf ich sie fassen? — Diese Hand — o Gott!

Tell (herzlich und mutig).

Hat euch verteidigt und das Land gerettet;  
Ich darf sie frei hinauf zum Himmel heben.

(Mönch macht eine rasche Bewegung, er erblickt ihn.)

Wer ist der Bruder hier?

Hedwig.

Ach, ich vergaß ihn!  
Sprich du mit ihm, mir grauf in seiner Nähe.

3145

Mönch (tritt näher).

Seid ihr der Tell, durch den der Landvogt fiel?

Tell.

Der bin ich, ich verberg' es keinem Menschen.

Mönch.

Ihr seid der Tell! Ach, es ist Gottes Hand,  
Die unter euer Dach mich hat geführt.

3150

Tell (mißt ihn mit den Augen).

Ihr seid kein Mönch! Wer seid ihr?

Mönch.

Ihr erschlugt  
Den Landvogt, der euch Böses that — Auch ich  
Hab' einen Feind erschlagen, der mir Recht  
Versagte — Er war euer Feind, wie meiner —  
Ich hab' das Land von ihm befreit.

Tell (zurückfahrend).

Ihr seid —

3155

Entsetzen! — Kinder! Kinder, geht hinein!  
Geh, liebes Weib! Geh, geh! — Unglücklicher!  
Ihr wäret —

Hedwig.

Gott, wer ist es?

Tell.

Frage nicht!  
Fort, fort! Die Kinder dürfen es nicht hören.  
Geh aus dem Hause — weit hinweg — du darfst  
Nicht unter einem Dach mit diesem wohnen.

3160

Hedwig.

Weh mir, was ist das? Kommt! (Seht mit den Kindern).

Tell (zu dem Mönch).

Ihr seid der Herzog  
 Von Oesterreich — Ihr seid's! Ihr habt den Kaiser  
 Erschlagen, euern Ohm und Herrn.

Johannes Parricida.

Er war

Der Räuber meines Erbes.

Tell.

Euern Ohm  
 Erschlagen, euern Kaiser! Und euch trägt  
 Die Erde noch! Euch leuchtet noch die Sonne!

3165

Parricida.

Tell, hört mich, eh' ihr —

Tell.

Von dem Blute triefend  
 Des Vaternordes und des Kaisermords,  
 Wagst du zu treten in mein reines Haus?  
 Du wagst's, dein Antlitz einem guten Menschen  
 Zu zeigen und das Gastrecht zu begehren?

3170

Parricida.

Bei euch hofft' ich Barmherzigkeit zu finden;  
 Auch ihr nahmt Rach' an eurem Feind.

Tell.

Unglücklicher!  
 Darfst du der Ehrsucht blut'ge Schuld vermengen  
 Mit der gerechten Nothwehr eines Vaters?  
 Hast du der Kinder liebes Haupt verteidigt?  
 Des Herdes Heiligtum beschützt? das Schrecklichste,

3175

Das Letzte von den Deinen abgewehrt?

— Zum Himmel heb' ich meine reinen Hände, 3180  
 Verfluche dich und deine That — Gerächt  
 Hab' ich die heilige Natur, die du  
 Geschändet — Nichts teil' ich mit dir — Gemordet  
 Hast du, ich hab' mein Teuerstes verteidigt.

Parricida.

Ihr stoßt mich von euch, trostlos, in Verzweiflung? 3185

Tell

Mich faßt ein Grausen, da ich mit dir rede.  
 Fort! Wandle deine fürchterliche Straße!  
 Laß rein die Hütte, wo die Unschuld wohnt!

Parricida (wendet sich zu gehen).

So kann ich, und so will ich nicht mehr leben!

Tell.

Und doch erbarmt mich deiner — Gott des Himmels! 3190  
 So jung, von solchem adeligen Stamm,  
 Der Enkel Rudolfs, meines Herrn und Kaisers,  
 Als Mörder flüchtig, hier an meiner Schwelle,  
 Des armen Mannes — flehend und verzweifelnd —

(Verhüllt sich das Gesicht.)

Parricida.

O, wenn ihr weinen könnt, laßt mein Geschick 3195  
 Euch jammern; es ist fürchterlich — Ich bin  
 Ein Fürst — ich war's — ich konnte glücklich werden,  
 Wenn ich der Wünsche Ungebuld bezwang.  
 Der Neid zernagte mir das Herz — Ich sah  
 Die Jugend meines Betters Leopold 3200  
 Gefrönt mit Ehre und mit Land belohnt,  
 Und mich, der gleiches Alters mit ihm war,  
 In slavischer Unmündigkeit gehalten —

Tell.

Unglücklicher, wohl kannte dich dein Ohm,

Da er dir Land und Leute weigerte!

Du selbst mit rascher, wilder Wahnsinnsthat

Rechtfertigst furchtbar seinen weisen Schluß.

— Wo sind die blut'gen Helfer deines Mords?

3205

Parricida.

Wohin die Rachegeister sie geführt;

Ich sah sie seit der Unglücksthat nicht wieder.

3210

Tell.

Weißt du, daß dich die Aht verfolgt, daß du

Dem Freund verboten und dem Feind erlaubt?

Parricida.

Darum vermeid' ich alle offne Straßen;

An keine Hütte wag' ich anzupochen —

Der Wüste kehrt' ich meine Schritte zu;

Mein eignes Schrecknis irr' ich durch die Berge

Und fahre schauernd vor mir selbst zurück,

Zeigt mir ein Bach mein unglückselig Bild.

O, wenn ihr Mitleid fühlt und Menschlichkeit —

3215

(Fällt vor ihm nieder.)

Tell (abgewendet).

Steht auf! Steht auf!

3220

Parricida.

Nicht, bis ihr mir die Hand gereicht zur Hilfe.

Tell.

Kann ich euch helfen? Kann's ein Mensch der Sünde?

Doch stehet auf — Was ihr auch Gräßliches

Berübt — Ihr seid ein Mensch — ich bin es auch;

Vom Tell soll keiner ungetröstet scheiden —

Was ich vermag, das will ich thun.

3225



**Parricida** (auffpringend und seine Hand mit Heftigkeit ergreifend.)

O Tell!

Ihr rettet meine Seele von Verzweiflung.

Tell.

Laßt meine Hand los — Ihr müßt fort. Hier könnt  
Ihr unentdeckt nicht bleiben, könnt entdeckt  
Auf Schutz nicht rechnen — Wo gedenkt ihr hin?  
Wo hofft ihr Ruh' zu finden?

3230

**Parricida.**

Weiß ich's? Ach!

Tell.

Hört, was mir Gott ins Herz giebt — Ihr müßt fort  
Ins Land Italien, nach Sanct Peters Stadt!  
Dort werft ihr euch dem Papsst zu Füßen, beichtet  
Ihm eure Schuld und löset eure Seele!

3235

**Parricida.**

Wird er mich nicht dem Rächer überliefern?

Tell.

Was er euch thut, das nehmet an von Gott!

**Parricida.**

Wie komm' ich in das unbefannte Land?  
Ich bin des Wegs nicht kundig, wage nicht  
Zu Wanderern die Schritte zu gesellen.

3240

Tell.

Den Weg will ich euch nennen, merket wohl!  
Ihr steigt hinauf, dem Strom der Reuß entgegen,  
(Die wildes Laufes von dem Berge stürzt +

**Parricida** (erschrickt).

Seh' ich die Reuß? Sie floß bei meiner That.

**Tell.**

Am Abgrund geht der Weg, und viele Kreuze  
Bezeichnen ihn, errichtet zum Gedächtnis  
Der Wanderer, die die Lawine begraben. 3245

**Parricida.**

Ich fürchte nicht die Schrecken der Natur,  
Wenn ich des Herzens wilde Qualen zähme.

**Tell.**

Vor jedem Kreuze fallet hin und büßet  
Mit heißen Neuethränen eure Schuld — 3250  
Und seid ihr glücklich durch die Schreckensstrafe,  
Sendet der Berg nicht seine Windeswehen  
Auf euch herab von dem beeisten Joch,  
So kommt ihr auf die Brücke, welche stäubet. 3255  
Wenn sie nicht einbricht unter eurer Schuld,  
Wenn ihr sie glücklich hinter euch gelassen,  
So reißt ein schwarzes Felsenthor sich auf —  
Kein Tag hat's noch erhellt — da geht ihr durch,  
Es führt euch in ein heitres Thal der Freude — 3260  
Doch schnellen Schritts müßt ihr vorüber eilen;  
Ihr dürft nicht weilen, wo die Ruhe wohnt.

**Parricida.**

O Rudolf! Rudolf! Königlicher Ahn!  
So zieht dein Enkel ein auf deines Reiches Boden!

**Tell.**

So immer steigend, kommt ihr auf die Höhen 3265  
Des Gottthards, wo die ew'gen Seen sind,  
Die von des Himmels Strömen selbst sich füllen.  
Dort nehmt ihr Abschied von der deutschen Erde,  
Und muntern Laufs führt euch ein andrer Strom

In's Land Italien hinab, euch das gelobte —

(Man hört den Auhreihen von vielen Auhhörnern geblasen.)

3270

Ich höre Stimmen. Fort!

Hedwig (eilt herein).

Wo bist du, Tell?

Der Vater kommt! Es nah'n in frohem Zug

Die Eidgenossen alle —

Parricida (verhüllt sich).

Wehe mir!

Ich darf nicht weilen bei den Glücklichen.

Tell.

Geh, liebes Weib! Erfrische diesen Mann,

Belad' ihn reich mit Gaben, denn sein Weg

Ist weit, und keine Herberg' findet er.

Eile! Sie nah'n.

3275

Hedwig.

Wer ist es?

Tell.

Forſche nicht!

Und wenn er geht, ſo wende deine Augen,

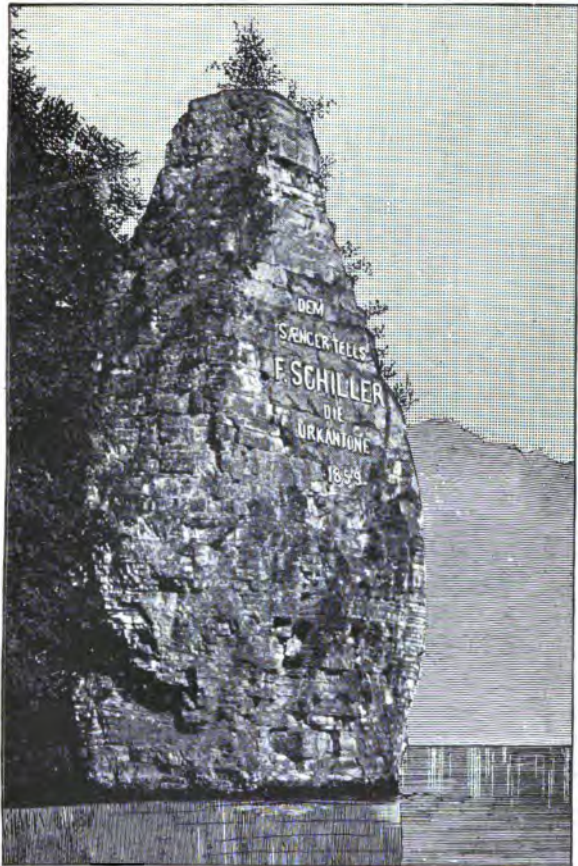
Daß ſie nicht ſehen, welchen Weg er wandelt!

3280

(Parricida geht auf den Tell zu mit einer raſchen Bewegung; dieſer aber bedeutet ihn mit der Hand und geht. Wenn beide zu verſchiedenen Seiten abgegangen, verändert ſich der Schauplatz, und man ſieht in der

### Lezten Scene.

den ganzen Thalgrund vor Tell's Wohnung, nebst den Anhöhen, welche ihn einschließen, mit Landleuten besetzt, welche sich zu einem malerischen Ganzen gruppieren. Andere kommen über einen hohen Steg, der über den Schächten führt, gezogen. Walther Fürst mit den beiden Knaben, Melchtal und Stauffacher kommen vorwärts, andere drängen nach; wie Tell heraustritt, empfangen ihn alle mit lautem Frohlocken.)



THE SCHILLER STONE (DER MYTHENSTEIN)

ON LAKE LUCERNE.

(To face p. 162.)





Alle.

Es lebe Tell, der Schütz und der Erretter!

(Indem sich die Vordersten um den Tell drängen und ihn umarmen, erscheinen noch Rudenz und Bertha, jener die Landleute, diese die Hedwig umarmend. Die Musik vom Berge begleitet diese stumme Scene. Wenn sie geendigt, tritt Bertha in die Mitte des Volks.)

Bertha.

Landleute! Eidgenossen! Nehmt mich auf  
In euern Bund, die erste Glückliche,  
Die Schutz gefunden in der Freiheit Land.  
In eure tapfre Hand leg' ich mein Recht;  
Wollt ihr als eure Bürgerin mich schützen?

3285

Landleute.

Das wollen wir mit Gut und Blut.

Bertha.

Wohlan!

So reich' ich diesem Jüngling meine Rechte,  
Die freie Schweizerin dem freien Mann!

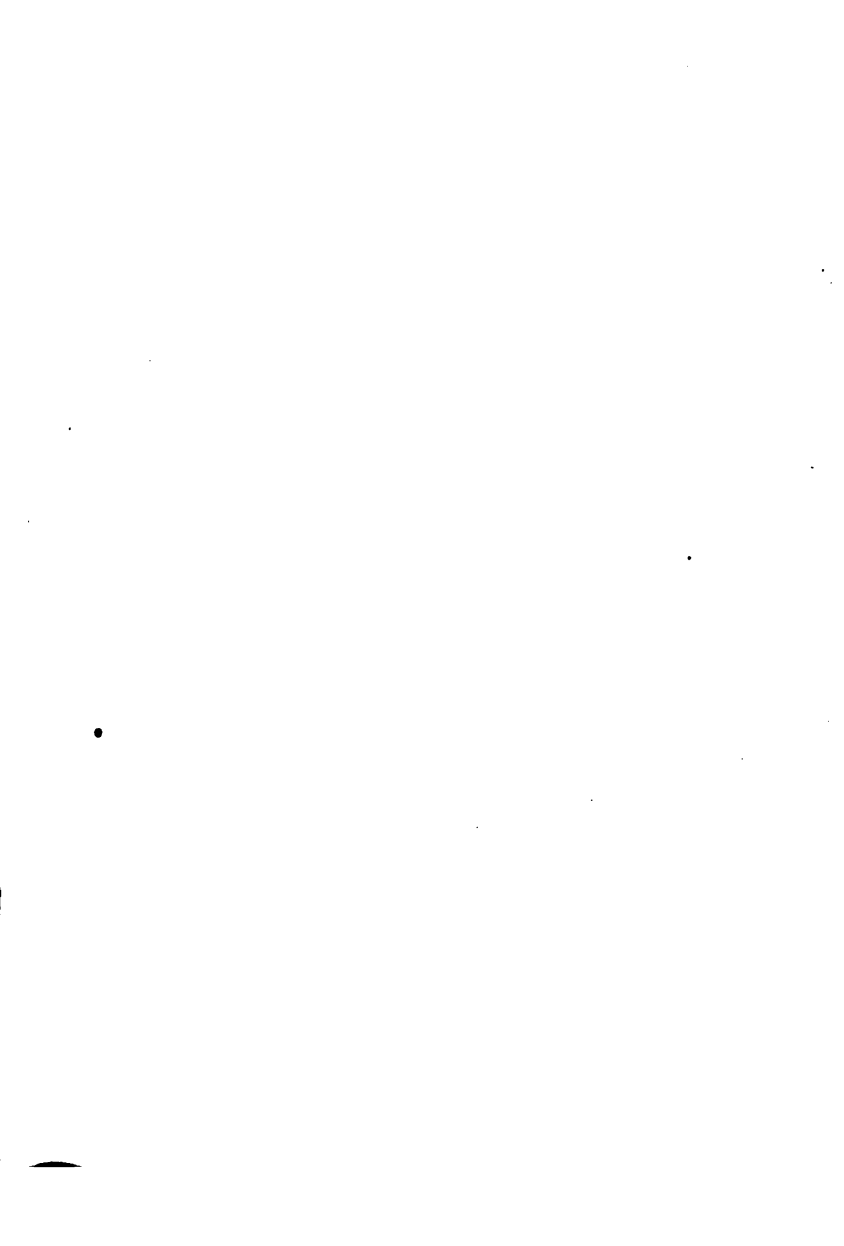
Rudenz.

Und frei erklär' ich alle meine Knechte.

3290

(Indem die Musik von neuem rasch einfällt, fällt der Vorhang.)





## NOTES.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HERMANN GESSLER, imperial governor (or prefect or bailliff) of the Cantons of Schwyz and Uri. Tradition makes him a member of the noble family of the Gesslers von Bruneck (or Brunegg), a castle of which the ruins may still be seen in Aargau, south of Brugg, between Lenzburg and Mellingen. The historical facts are that this castle did not come into the possession of the Gessler family before the end of the fourteenth century, and that no Gessler was ever Reichsvogt in Uri.

The word *Vogt* (Reichsvogt and Landvogt being used in the same sense) was borrowed from the mediæval Latin *vocatus* in the sense of *advocatus* or "advocate." In the middle ages a rich variety of special applications developed from this general notion of advocate, protector, guardian, defender, representative. In this play both the simple and the compound forms of the word are used of the representatives of the authority and the interests of the Empire or the Emperor.

The Gessler of the drama is the typical harsh tyrant, cruel, cunning, inflexible, ready to sacrifice any or all who are under his authority, in order to aggrandize his Empire and himself.

BARON WERNER VON ATTINGHAUSEN, *Banneret* (cf. n. l. 336), is an historical personage from an ancient noble family. He was Landammann or chief-magistrate of Uri from 1294 to 1317. Schiller makes him much older than he really was, and deviates also from historical fact in making him the last of his family and in placing his death before the accomplishment of Swiss liberty. He is the representa-



tive, more narrowly, of the patriarchal nobility whose epoch is now passing away, and, more broadly, of the part taken by the nobles in freeing the land.

ULRICH VON RUDENZ, a fictitious character. Tschudi mentions a von Rudenz as a nephew of Stauffacher, and the castle of this name belonged to the Attinghausen family. We should expect the name Rudenz to be accented on the second syllable, but in the play the verse-stress falls on the first syllable more often. Ulrich is the bold young noble, misled at first by his ambition, but regained through love of Bertha to the cause of his country. Together with his uncle he typifies the attitude of the nobility, without whom the overthrow of the hated foreign rule is not accomplished.

WERNER STAUFFACHER, an historical character in so far as there was a Landammann, of this name, descendant of an ancient family, in the years 1313 and 1314, who lived as late as the year 1341. A chapel at Steinen, built in 1400, is said to be on the site of his house. The Stauffacher of the drama is a man in the full maturity of his powers. Rich and childless, cautious, deliberate, a man of counsel, knowing all the history of his country, an able speaker, he is the predestined founder and soul of the confederation. He represents the Canton Schwyz.

CONRAD HUNN, an historical character, sometime Landammann, mentioned officially as early as 1251.

ITEL REDING. This family was long famous in Swiss history; a Rudolf Reding planned the successful movements of the battle of Morgarten in 1315; Itel Reding was a worthy Landammann of the early portion of the fifteenth century. Cf. n. l. 1086.

HANS AUF DER MAUER.

JÜRIG (George) IM HOFE.

ULRICH DER SCHMID (Smith).

JÖST (Jöbst, contracted from Jodöcus) VON WEILER. The last four names are taken with unessential modifications from a document of the year 1282, relating to Conrad Hunn.

**WALTHER FÜRST**, the traditional father-in-law of Tell, is an historical character, in so far as Tschudi mentions him as a well-known, wise, and honorable man of means, living at Attinghausen. In the drama he represents the Canton Uri, and respected, cautious, conservative old age.

**WILHELM TELL.** (See Introduction, pp. lix-lxiii and Notes *passim*.)

**RÖSSELMANN**, *the Priest.*

**PETERMANN**, *the Sacristan.* The last two names are genuine Swiss names, but not here derived from definite historical characters. Among those who fell at Sempach a Petermann is mentioned; it is also possible that Schiller used the name of Petermann Etterlin (see Introd. p. lviii), just as that of Am Bühl below and of Johannes von Müller in l. 2948. These characters are typical of influential classes.

**KUONI** (pronounce Kŭ'(ō)ni), *the Herdsman.* Kuoni is the familiar abbreviation of Konrad.

**WERNI**, *the Huntsman.* Werni, from Werner.

**RUODI** (-ŭ'(ō)- as in Kuoni), *the Fisherman.* Ruodi, from Ruodolf = Rudolf. The typical nature of these three characters is self-evident.

**ARNOLD VOM MELCHTHAL**, an historical character. Tschudi names him Arnold von Melchthal, Müller names him Erni (= Arnold) an der Halden, from the Melchthal. This family name is given to his father in l. 562. The family flourished until modern times. Melchthal, as he is called in the drama, represents the Canton Unterwalden, and bold, impetuous youth.

**CONRAD BAUMGART(EN)**, historical on the authority of Tschudi, living at Alzellen.

**MEIER VON SARNEN** (cf. n. l. 1072), a name taken from Tschudi.

**STRUTH (or Struthan) VON WINKELRIED.** Tschudi states that a Winkelried was present at the Rütli. Schiller took the name of the traditional hero described in the note to l. 1075. Arnold von Winkelried was the hero of the battle of Sempach in 1386.

**KLAUS VON DER FLÜE** (= precipice), famous as a hermit

and political peacemaker in the second half of the fifteenth century.

**BURKHART AM BÜHEL** (= hill). In the document of 1282 relating to Conrad Hunn, Schiller found the names Ulrich am Berge and Burkhart von Ybach; of these he made Burkhart am Bühl, commemorating also Joh. Ludwig am Bühl, author of a drama *Wilhelm Tell* (1792). (See Introd. p. lxiii.)

**ARNOLD VON SEWA**, a name derived from the document just mentioned. The real Sewa was in Schwyz, not in Unterwalden.

**PFEIFER OF LUCERNE**, unhistorical. The name is that of an old and notable family of Lucerne, of which a contemporary of Schiller was a distinguished representative.

**KUNZ OF GERSAU**, a fictitious character. Kunz is a familiar shortening of Konrad. Gersau is a hamlet on the lake S.E. of the Rigi.

**JENNI**, *Fisherman's Boy*. The name, pronounced "Yenni," is abbreviated from Johann.

**SEPPi**, *Herdsmen's Boy*. The name from Joseph.

**GERTRUD**, *Stauffacher's Wife*. The wife of Stauffacher was by late tradition named Margaretha Herlō'big. Schiller makes her (l. 240) to be the daughter of Konrad ab Iberg, Landammann of Schwyz in 1311.

**HEDWIG**, *Tell's Wife*. The historians make Tell a son-in-law of Walther Fürst. For the names Gertrud, Hedwig, and (below) Mechthild, see Introd. p. lxiv.

**BERTHA VON BRUNECK**, a fictitious character, the name from the castle mentioned above.

**ARMGARD**, **MECHTHILD**, **ELSBETH**, **HILDEGARD**, are arbitrarily chosen names. Mechthild = Mathilde, Elsbeth = Elisabeth.

**WALTHER** and **WILHELM**. These names are given by Müller to Tell's sons on the authority of the old chronicler Klingenberg, in the order Wilhelm and Walther. Schiller makes the older bear his grandfather's name.

**FRIESSHARDT** and **LEUTHOLD** are of course fictitious. The names Friesshardt and the following Rudolf der Harras

are derived from Müller's account of the battle of Sempach. Friesshardt means "fearful and bold"; Leuthold seems to mean "kind to people," but originally it meant "ruling the people."

RUDOLF DER HARRAS, *Gessler's Master of the Horse*, in this connection fictitious. "Harras" is generally taken to mean Master of the Horse, and to be derived from the mediæval Latin *haracium*, "stud of horses."

JOHANN THE PARRICIDE, *Duke of Swabia*. See Introd. p. lii.

STÜSSI, *the Ranger*, fictitious. The name, found in Müller, is the familiar abbreviation of Justus.

THE BULL (= *Hornblower*) of Uri. See note to l. 1091.

OVERSEER (or *Taskmaster*).

BROTHERS OF MERCY. See n. \*139 on p. 266.

HORSEMEN (or *Troopers*) of *Gessler and of Landenberg*. See n. l. 72.

## ACT I.

ARGUMENT.—The *first* scene is opened on the shore of the lake with three songs by a fisher-boy, a herdsman, and a hunter. An approaching storm gathers them in conversation with the fisherman at the latter's hut. Baumgarten, pursued by horsemen of the governor of Unterwalden, enters breathless, and begs to be ferried over. He has killed the bailiff Wolfenschiessen for having attempted to dishonor his wife. While all are refusing in fear to help Baumgarten, Tell appears and bravely delivers Baumgarten from pursuit by rowing him across. The baffled horsemen destroy the herds and the hut of the herdsman and fisherman.

In the *second* scene we are before the handsome house of Stauffacher, a well-to-do yeoman of Steinen in Schwyz. Gertrud, his wife, shares his anxious fears for himself and their country, and inspires him to initiate a common movement against Austrian oppression. As Stauffacher is about to set out for Uri, there to confer with like-minded friends,

Tell brings the rescued Baumgarten to him for secret shelter.

The *third* scene presents at Altorf in Uri the erection, under orders of the cruel governor Gessler, of a stronghold and prison. While Tell and Stauffacher are discussing it, a public crier proclaims the governor's outrageous edict that a pole is to be set up and on top of this a hat placed, to which the people shall do obeisance. Stauffacher vainly endeavors to persuade Tell actively to join with him in planning for a common uprising. Just as they leave, a roofer is killed by a fall. The noblewoman Bertha von Bruneck, who sympathizes with the Swiss, utters against the building the righteous malediction, that voices the feeling of all.

The *fourth* scene shows the youth Arnold vom Melchthal, a refugee from the wanton oppression of the governor of Unterwalden, in the house of the aged Walther Fürst in Altorf. As they are conversing on the wrongs Melchthal has suffered and those he fears may be inflicted on his father, Stauffacher comes and the young man conceals himself. Stauffacher, ignorant of the presence of Melchthal in Altorf, recites to Fürst the vengeance which the governor has wreaked, by blinding Melchthal's father and robbing him of everything. Young Arnold, hearing this from the adjoining room, rushes in, unable to contain himself, and with impassioned eloquence utters his despair and grief and vehement vows of vengeance. These three men, conscious that the crisis is at hand, form an alliance, offensive and defensive, in representation of their three cantons. They agree, each bringing ten trusty men of his own canton, to met at the Rütli, there to conclude a more formal union.

#### SCENE I.

\* *Aufzug*, 'act,' from *aufziehen*, first used only of the 'raising' of the curtain. The synonym *Akt* is also much used, derived not from the French *acte*, but from the Latin *actus*.

\* *Scène*, from French *scène*, is used throughout this drama

and in „Die Räuber.“ In all his other plays Schiller uses the word *Auftritt*. As in English usage a new Scene implies a change of place and stage-setting, while there is a new *Auftritt* whenever a character, excepting insignificant messengers and the like, makes an entry or an exit.

The four scenes of Act I are on October 28, 1307; the first scene is late in the forenoon at a place on the western shore of the Lake of Lucerne near Treib in the Canton Uri. The German name of this lake,

\* *Vierwaldstättersee*, ‘Lake of the Four Forest Cantons,’ is made up of the noun *See* and an indeclinable adj. of place in *-tr* (Wh. 415, 5), formed from the numeral *vier* and *Waldstätte*, the archaic plural of *Waldstat[t]*, lit. ‘wood-stead.’ The Swiss Cantons were first called *Stätte* and then *Orte* until the gradual introduction after the middle of the sixteenth century of the word *Kanton* from the French. The four Cantons that gave the name to the lake were Uri, Schwyz, Unterwalden, and Luzern, the first three being the original *Waldstätte*. This lake was the natural means of communication of the inhabitants of these districts, and at this place we are in Uri, not far from the boundary of Unterwalden, while to the east, just across the lake, about half a mile distant, lies the Canton

\* *Schwyz*, to be pronounced as if spelled *Schwiz*.

\* *unweit* is now regularly construed with the gen. or *von*.

\* *Ratten*, in general, mountain ‘meadow, mead,’ to which it is an etymological parallel; a specifically Alemannic word, but since the middle of the eighteenth century of wide use in poetic diction. *Die Weide* is any piece of land where cattle can eat standing grass, whether cultivated or wild; *die Wiese* is always a field of cultivated grass and especially one lying low and well-watered; *die Matte* may be an uncultivated surface, but strictly should be one on which the grass can be mowed with the scythe; *der Acker* is an untilled piece of land covered with grass, mostly lying high and dry, while *die Trift* is properly a fallow field used temporarily for pasturage, although the word is employed also of any pasturage, especially by poets.

\* **liegen**, inf. obj. of *sicht*. A number of verbs govern an infinitive in the manner of a second object, along with their ordinary object; these are *heißen*, *nennen*, *lehren*, *helfen*, *machen*, *lassen*, and, denoting perception by the senses, *sehen*, *hören*, *fühlen*, *finden*.

\* **die Spitzen des Hafens** (*Hafen* or *Spaggen*), 'Hook.' The poet conceives the two *Mythen* to be parts of the *Hafen*, as a group of mountains, in the Canton Schwyz, northeast of the town of the same name. Now the name *Hafen* is no longer used as a collective designation, and a distinction is made between the three peaks, *der Hafen*, *die große Mythe* and *die kleine Mythe*.

\* **Eisgebirge**, in the Canton Glarus, which with poetic license are assumed to be visible.

\* **Ruhreihen** (the common Swiss form is *Rührreihen*, also *Rührreigen*), lit. 'cow-dance,' 'cow-line,' or 'cow-song,' but best rendered by transferring the word, *Kuhreihen*. It is not properly a song, but a modulated succession of simple tones without words, formed in the throat, but sometimes blown through the long alp-horn (cf. the stage-direction following line 3270). Its real purpose is to call together the cows at milking-time, when they may be widely scattered over the mountains, but it is also sounded to the driving-out of the herd at other times. *Reihen* is here the old German designation for a dance in line or rank, which general meaning also appears in the French equivalent term, *rang* (= *Rang*) *des vaches*. Some prefer to derive it from a Swiss verb *reihen* = *holen*, *heimholen*, but this seems to be a secondary development from the former meaning. While the *Kuhreihen* is in some sense uniform in its general type, it has countless variations. It is said to be heard in greatest purity and originality in the Canton Appenzell.

1. **Es**, very often the neuter nominative *es*, as the indefinite grammatical subject, serves the purpose of a mere device for shifting the true subject to a position after the verb, and is itself untranslatable.—Note the personification of the lake.

**ladet**, in modern prose the compound *ladet* — *ein*, is more usual, while the older language preferred the simple verb.

It is also to be noted that in poetry the simple forms are often preferred to the compound forms of prose.

4. **Flöten**, plural of **Flöte**, not infin. used as substantive.

8. **die Wasser**, poetic plural, as in ll. 35 and 117.

9. **es ruft**, 'there's a call'; **es** is the subject, indefinite and impersonal, and so suggesting mystery. Cf. lines 40, 116, 2835-6, and mark the difference between this use of **es** and that in l. 1.

10. **Lieb**, in old German, in poetry and to some extent colloquially, the adj. ending is sometimes omitted in the masc. and fem., as well as frequently in the neut. nom. and acc. There are in this play many instances of the omitted neut. ending.

(**du**) **bist**, note the colloquial omission of the subject pronoun, which is common in the songs and familiar speech of the people, and often used by Schiller to produce that effect.

**mein**, the use of spaced or separated type, as in this word, is for emphasis like that of *italics* in English.

11-12. This song was suggested to Schiller by the legend narrated by Scheuchzer, that Lake Calandari (known now as *der Schwellisee*), in the district of Schams near Chur, possessed the power of drawing into its depths people who fell asleep near it. The sweet strong attraction that beautiful water has for all men has, however, from the earliest times been a favorite subject of legend and poetry; cf. the ancient story of the Argonaut Hylas and the modern ballad *Der Fischer* by Goethe.

15. **Der Senne**, the 'cow-keeper' or 'herdsman' of an Alpine dairy; he drives the cows to the **Alp(e)**, fem., i.e. mountain pasture which is not mowed, and tends them there. The cows begin to be driven up to the **Alpen** at the end of May or early in June, but the highest pastures are not reached until in July; the return in reverse order is earlier or later, according to the weather. For a large herd and pasture there may be the following **Alpknächte** or **Alpler**; a **Senne(e)**, a **Zusen(e)**, i.e. assistant to the **Senne(e)**, a **Hirt(e)** or **Rührer**, and a **Sanndub**, i.e. a 'boy' usually of twelve or four-





teen years ; when there are so many, the *Stamm*(t) is the responsible head of all, including the dairy-production, while the *Stirt*(t) has charge only of the cows.

17. *zu Berg* (or, more strictly, *zu Alp*) *fahren* is the technical expression for the ascent with cows to the high pastures. The present, used for the future, has reference to the following spring, and

*wir kommen wieder* is an explanatory repetition of the first half of the line.

*fahren*, here in its old meaning of 'go' = *gehen, wandern*, as also in l. 348.

20. Springs that flow in May because of the melting snow, but are dry in autumn.

25. *Es*, cf. note to 1.

*donnern*, i.e. with the fall of avalanches and the bursting of glaciers ; cf. l. 38 and ll. 1780-1.

*Steg*, here probably 'path,' but different in l. 1269.

26. The verb is impersonal, with omission of the grammatical subject *es* and with the logical subject in the dat.

*schwindlichtem* and (l. 31) *neblichtes*, the adj. termination *-icht* is now generally replaced by *-ig*.

30. *Reis*, neut. ; distinguish this from *der Reis*.

31. *Reer*, accus. used absolutely, as if governed by *with* or *having* understood.

35. *Wassern*, the same as *Reer* of l. 31 and *Wolken* of l. 33, and not the torrents and waterfalls on the mountain-sides, as many commentators interpret.

\* *verändert sich*, said only of the aspect of the landscape.

\* *dampfes Strömen*, cf. ll. 25 and 38.

The opening of this scene is a dramatic overture of striking beauty. The romantic scenery transports us at once into the world of this drama. The idyllic songs portray the peaceful, joyous existence of an innocent, harmless people. Short as are these songs of (as yet unnamed) representatives of the three leading occupations of the Swiss, they make us know that this people is bound by strong and intimate ties to its land, is self-reliant, courageous, tried and proved in danger.

Upon this brightness and happiness there now begins to gather the darkness of a violent storm. Thus the note of conflict is struck. These men have no unreasonable fear of the natural storm. How will this people bear itself under the moral storm-clouds of oppression? †

\* **Melknopf**, 'milk-pail.'

\* **Handbube**, 'boy' in the sense of 'assistant'; cf. English 'handmaid.'

37. **Rach' hurtig** (adv.), 'Be quick,' 'Make haste.'

**Rane**, ordinarily a freight boat from 40 to 60 feet long, but here, borrowed from Etterlin, in the sense of *Fischerboot*, *Rahn*; a loan-word, Latin *navis*, early imported into Switzerland and Southern Germany.

38. **Der graue Thalvogt**, lit. 'the gray dale-governor' or 'the gray lord of the valley'; personification as a storm-spirit (cf. l. 425) of the wind driving dark clouds before it. The expression is from Scheuchzer, who reports it of the people of Engelberg. Cf. *Introd.* n. pp. xxxi, xxxii.

**Gira**, 'glacier,' primarily the old snow of the high Alps that remains unmelted from year to year and gradually becomes solid ice; then also glacier or, as in l. 1778, a mountain-top covered with such snow and ice.

39. **Der Mythenstein**, really a rock in the Lake of Lucerne, rising only about eighty feet above its surface (cf. n. l. 725). Either Schiller uses it here of one or both of the peaks which he regarded as constituting the Haken (see p. 3 and note), or he misapprehended the size or location of the Mythenstein proper. The line refers to the gathering of a cloud-cap about a mountain-peak as a sign of storm.

40. **Wetterloch**, 'weather-hole,' a designation not infrequently used in mountainous districts of deep, narrow caves and crevices, with or without an upper outlet, from which in summer a cold wind proceeds, while in winter the temperature is higher within than without and the draft is

† For the running notes on the plot and characters the editor has drawn freely on the commentary of H. Gaudig in 'Aus deutschen Lesebüchern,' cf. *Preface*, p. iii.

reversed. According to Schiller's authority Scheuchzer the line should read *Und lau her etc.*, for he says: „aus den Wetterlöchern, d. h. Höhlen oder Bergspalten, bläst es kalt wenn das Wetter dauernd schön bleibt, lau und dünnig bei eintretendem Sturm und Regen.“

42. 's for es on account of the meter, in order to make 's *kommt* but one syllable; cf. l. 51.

*Keine Schafe . . . Gras*, implies that, after having been grazing all the morning, the sheep are feeding as if they had had nothing.

43. *Wächter*, lit. 'watcher,' is the speaker's dog = English 'Watch.' Kuoni's weather-signs are those natural to the herdsman.

44, 45. Werner's signs are those of the hunter.

46. *lügen* (with long u, or in Swiss pronunciation *uc*) = *sehen*, essentially a South German and Swiss word; an etymological parallel to English 'look.'

*verlaufen* is past part. with the auxiliary *hat* omitted, as is so frequently done.

47. *Risel*, with long i, is a popular diminutive of *Elisabeth*. Each cow has her own name. These names are sometimes women's names, but usually are taken from physical characteristics: *Schek* 'dappled,' *Musa* (mouse-colored), *Stoß* (with horns bent sharply upward).

*am Geläut*, by the tinkling of her bell.

49. *Geläute*, here 'set of bells.' Every *Genne* has a *Geläute*, which consists of three or at least two bells, harmonizing with one another and with the sounds of the *Ruhreihen*.

*Weißer*, honorary title of the upper herdsman.

50. *Landsmann*, to be distinguished from *Landmann*.

51. *Bin*, see note on *bist*, l. 10.

*nit*, popular and dialectic for *nicht*, in Central and especially in Southern Germany and Switzerland.

52. *Des Attinghäusers* = *des Freiherrn von Attinghausen*, cf. p. 165. *Attinghäuser* is the adj. formed from *Attinghaus* or *Attinghausen*, cf. ll. 128, 282, 717, 2880.

This mention of Baron Attinghausen is preparatory to the full exposition of the Nobles-plot, which is de-

laid by reason of the great length of Act I until Scene I of Act II.

**zugezählt**, 'told off to'; it is implied that different herds, each of definite number, were rented by the baron to different shepherds.

53. **der Ruh** (dat.) . . . **zu Galle steht**. **stehen**, in the meaning 'become,' 'suit' governs the dat., commonly taking an adverb, *gut*, *schlecht*, *schön*, etc., and often also an adverbial phrase, *zu* with the dat., indicating the part of the face or body especially affected.

54. **Reihen**, 'line,' cf. note on *Ruhreihen*, p. 172.

55. This and what is told of the chamois just below is based on facts of common experience, according to Schiller's authorities.

56. **Ihr seid nicht klag!** 'you are crazy,' but not too seriously said.

57. **(Das) ist bald (= leicht) gesagt**; in effect, it's easy to say that, if you have no regard for the facts of the case; cf. l. 1381.

59. **Die**, in place of the personal pronoun of the third person used emphatically.

60. 'ne, for *eine*, colloquial; cf. ll. 375, 403, 1876.

**Vorhut**, 'sentinel,' usually 'vanguard.'

61. **Mit heller Pfeife**, in effect, 'with sharp hissing'; *Pfeife* for *pfeifendähnlicher Ton*, which is said to be *ein heiserer, schneidender, etwas gezogener Ton, der wahrscheinlich aus den Vorderzähnen geht.*"

62. **Alp**, see note on *Der Senne*, l. 15.

**abgeweidet**, 'grazed bare.'

63. **Glücksel'ge**, in the older language synonymous with *glücklich*, as here, but now distinguished from it in prose.

64. **lehrt sich's . . . wieder**, 'one returns' or 'there is a return.' An intransitive reflexive (or an intransitive passive), used impersonally to express the action without reference to some particular subject, is a rather frequent idiom in German.

65. **gelaufen**, past part. used in the sense of a pres. part. after a verb of motion, to express the mode of motion.

66. **der Baumgart**, colloquially shortened form of the name



Baumgarten, l. 549; cf. Wolfenschützen, l. 78, with the form in l. 129. Note the familiar use of the def. art. with the proper name.

Alzellen, a village in Unterwalden, four hours distant from the lake, near to Wolfenschützen; see map.

The clouds, the thunders, and the lurid lightnings of oppression are indeed near.

68. *was* (acc.) *giebt's* (bas) *so eilig* (ist)? 'why this haste?'

70. *was* (acc.) *habt ihr?* what is the matter with you?

*denn*, not to be translated, but in effect, 'I should like to know.'

72. *Sandvogt*, 'governor' or 'prefect,' the title of the chief ruler of a district, canton, or country, appointed by the Emperor and representing him; in this case it was Beringer von Landenberg, governor of Unterwalden. There are several occurrences of the word *Vogt* in compounds in this play: *Reichsvogt*, cf. n. p. 165; *Burgvogt*, l. 77; *Thalvogt*, l. 38.

73. *ein Mann des Todes*, i.e. 'a dead man.' In this phrase *Mann* has the old sense of 'vassal,' 'bondsmen,' and death is personified as a conqueror or lord, cf. l. 2791. Frequently the word *Mann* is omitted from this phrase.

74. *die Reifigen*, 'horsemen,' 'troopers'; this word is now used only in poetry and elevated diction.

75. *Reh' ich euch* (dat.) *Rede*, 'I will give you an account of myself.' In this phrase, *jemandem* (zur) *Rede* *stehen*, the word *Rede* has quite distinctly its original meaning of a reckoning or accounting, primarily in regard to money, but then also in regard to other responsibilities.

At this point we must understand that Ruodi goes aside to his boat, to make it ready and to untie it; he returns just before l. 103.

77. *Burgvogt*, ordinarily 'castellan,' but here rather 'governor' or 'burggrave.'

*Rosberg* (or *Rosberg*), a castle in Unterwalden, three miles west of Stanz, on that part of the lake of Lucerne which is called Lake Alpnach. The *Sandvogt*, Landenberg, had given over the stronghold, of which ruins are still to be seen, to

Wolfenschiessen, a man of an important noble family in Unterwalden, who had adopted the cause of Austria.

**saß**, 'had his seat,' 'lived'; **sitzen** in this sense is archaic and poetic.

78. **enich**, obj. of **verfolgen**, or to be translated as the subject of it, taken passively.

79. The first individual act of redress has been performed by Baumgarten.

81. Complete the line with **gethan hätte**, or with **thun würde**.

82. **Hausrecht**, 'household right.' Both the Roman and the ancient German law gave to the injured husband the right to kill the violator or paramour of his wife.

85. **bös**, see note to **Lieb**, l. 10.

89. **er** = Ruodi.

91. **Angst des Todes**, for prose **Todesangst**.

92. The effect of Baumgarten's agitation is enhanced by the omission of the words **sie rief** or **sie sagte**, to introduce his wife's report, and in this the subjunctives of indirect statement, **lieg'**, **hab'**, **sei**.

93. **rüsten**, archaic, now poetic.

94. "Then he made improper proposals to her."

96. **frisch hinzu**, "quickly thither," i.e. to my house; for this use of **frisch**, cf. ll. 103, 176, 364, 765.

97. **hab' ich ihm's** (= **das**) **Bad gesegnet**, lit., 'I blessed his bath for him,' an ironical phrase, derived from the mediæval custom that the servant wished the bather well. Both the simple **segnen** and the compound **gesegnen** are used in this phrase.

100. **hat's** = **er hat es**.

**um**, 'from.'

This line gives the political disposition of the people of Unterwalden.

101. **nüchtern**, the current present form is **nüchbar**.

**mir wird nachgesetzt**, impersonal passive; only in this way can a passive be formed of verbs that govern the dative alone; rendered by personal passive in English.

102. With or immediately after this line Ruodi returns from his boat, having decided not to attempt to use it.



103. **hinüberschaffen** (weak) = **übersetzen**, l. 69.
104. **(Es) geht nicht**, 'it can't be done'; cf. English, 'it's no go.'
107. **Dem Nächsten**, 'neighbor' in the biblical sense.
109. **Der Föhn ist los**, 'the Föhn has broken loose.' Föhn, probably from Latin Favonius as a loan-word, is the south-east to south wind, warm and dry, which blows in Central Switzerland from time to time, most frequently in spring and autumn, lasting sometimes only a few hours and again a week or longer. The older view that this wind originated in Africa, as the sirocco, is now rejected by the best authorities, who refer it to general meteorological conditions, affecting the Atlantic Ocean and the northern part of Europe as well. This wind is to Switzerland a source of important benefits as well as of dangers; it makes plants wither, animals fret and chafe, men inactive, and may be very destructive on both land and water, but it melts away the snow, hastening spring, and later dries the hay and ripens the grapes.
111. **mein**, poetic for **meiner**, gen. of **ich**.
112. **Es geht ums Leben**, 'it's a matter of life (and death),' or 'his life is at stake'; in usual prose, **Es gilt das Leben**.
114. Cf. ll. 1528-9.
115. **Kind** in this phrase is the old plural.
121. **Rettungsufer**, cf. note on **Retter**, l. 31. It was but little over half a mile distant.
124. **hinübertrüge**, pret. subjunctive, potential.
125. **(ich) muß**.
126. **der Tell**, cf. note on **der**, l. 66.
- Bürglen**, a village at the entrance of the valley of the Schächen, half an hour's distance above Altorf in Uri.
127. Characteristically Tell's first utterance is of help.
128. **Aljeker**, cf. note on l. 52.
129. Cf. notes on ll. 66, 67.
130. **Königs**, cf. Introduction, n. p. xxxvi.
133. **fürcht't**, such elision is characteristic of old German and of present Alemannic dialects; cf. ll. 175, 1389.
135. **jengen**, for prose, **bezeugen**.

**zu wagen** (ist). In German the active infin. with *zu* is often used in dependence on a form of *sein*, with the logical value of a passive infin.

136. **läßt sich alles wagen**, 'everything can be ventured.'

137. **Söllentrachen**, 'jaws of death' (*lit.*, hell).

139. **brave**, not merely in a narrow sense 'brave,' but as always in the broader sense of 'good,' 'worthy.'

141. **Port**, only poetic, prose *Haften*.

**läßt sich's gemächlich raten**, 'advice can (very) comfortably (or easily) be given.'

143. In translation take **erbarmen** after **sich**.

\* **Girten** = Kuoni and Seppi.

145. **und (wâr's) mein leiblich** (= *eigens*) **Rind**.

146. After **Judä** (Latin genitive of *Judaë*) understand **Tag**. October 28th is St. Simon's and St. Jude's day. Ruodi finds a pretext in the superstition that the lake demanded on this day the sacrifice of a human life. This belief is often held concerning lakes and rivers and midsummer-day. This line gives us definitely the date of the opening of the drama.

148. **mit eitler Rede** = mit bloßer Rede ohne That, 'with idle words,' cf. l. 2511.

149. **werden**, poetic for prose *zu Teil werden*. Cf. l. 645.

155. **wohl**, 'indeed,' as also in l. 163.

156. **ein anderer**, = Gott.

158. **der Menschen**, *gen. plur.* depending on *Hand* understood.

159. **wenn . . . begegnet**, here euphemism for *wenn ich sterbe*; cf. in Latin: *si quid mihi humanitus accidisset*.

160. **lassen**, 'let be,' 'leave undone.'

161. **Reißer Steuermann**, virtually a compound with the chief accent on *Reißer*; the meaning is, in effect, boatman by calling, professional boatman.

168. **Kräftiglich**, old and Biblical form of *kräftig*, an infrequent adverb in modern German.

170. **angesprengt**, cf. note on *gelaufen*, l. 65.

172. Complete the line with *habet*.

173. **Des Wegs**, 'this way,' *adv. gen.* That *de* here has



very strong demonstrative force is shown by its accent, which is indicated by the spacing of the type.

175. *Reit't*, contraction for *reitet*, 2d plur. imper., cf. *fürcht't*, l. 133; *reitet zu*, 'ride on hard.'

176. *Wenn ihr frisch beilegt*, 'if you hasten quickly,' 'if you bestir yourselves briskly'; *beilegen* seems here to be intended to be a boatman's expression of rapid movement used mockingly; if so, Schiller mistook its meaning, which is really 'to heave to,' 'to lay to'; *beilegen*, as an intrans. verb, in the sense of *sich daran halten, nicht müde werden*, i.e. 'to keep on,' 'to lay on,' is not otherwise known.

178. *uns*, ethical dative, untranslatable.

*büßen*, 'suffer for it.'

182. *Diesem Lande* = *den drei Walbstätten*.

The second part of this scene is a drama in miniature whose title might be "Tell, the Rescuer." Upon the exposition of Baumgarten's situation and danger the plot proper follows in the refusal of Ruodi and the readiness of Tell to rescue him. The vigorous movement of the dialogue is noteworthy. One typical outrage of a most sacred relation and right, which has been attempted in Unterwalden, is exhibited to us in the narrative and the person of Baumgarten, while the scene ends with wanton robbery and destruction in Uri. Nevertheless one rescue has been effected before our very eyes, and that by a man of unique power (l. 164). May he not be the savior of the country, for whom Ruodi despairingly prays as the scene closes?

Tell's character is drawn in some of its main lines with bold strokes. He is quick to see need of help in others; he is quick in decision; he is unselfish; he trusts in God, even to the risking of his life; he excels in physical strength and skill. But he seems not inclined to deliberation and counsel; his eyes are not open to the general dangers that threaten from the governors; it is the fate of Ruodi as an individual, and not the collective interest of the Swiss, that moves him; he acts also solely as an individual. Herein lies now the

great importance—often underestimated—of this scene for the Tell-plot. It insures our enthusiastic admiration of Tell, upon which our confidence in him shall rest unshaken during Scene 3 of this Act and his later absence (Act II. Sc. 2) from the meeting of the Rütli.

## ACT I. SCENE 2.

\* **Steinen**, a village northwest of the town Schwyz, near Lake Lowerz.

\* **Stauffacher**, see note, p. 166.

\* **Pfeifer**, see note, p. 168.

184. **Östreich**, the longer form **Österreich** is used also where metrical convenience requires, as in l. 194.

185. **Reich**, the Empire as distinguished from Austria; see *Introd.* p. xlvi.

187. **doch**, for emphasis, as often, 'do' or 'pray.'

**Wirtin**, old German for *Hausfrau*; cf. ll. 238 and 516.

188. This line is Homeric; cf. *Iliad*, vi. 224-5.

189. **Gersan**, a hamlet in the Canton Schwyz, on the lake beneath the Rigi.

190. **Was . . . auch Schweres**, 'whatever hardship.' The adj. is used substantively with the indefinite pronoun *was*, whose indefinite character is increased, as very often, by the insertion of *auch* (*nur* or *immer* are likewise used).

190-192, cf. ll. 492, 1437, 1458-9.

193. **Ein anderer Kaiser**, = ein Kaiser von einem anderen Hause als das habsburgische. The imperial office was elective, not hereditary; see l. 3023 and n.

194. The first clause is the condition, the second is the conclusion.

**erst** = einmal.

The conversation between Pfeifer and Stauffacher—a brief introduction to the main portion of the scene—makes it evident that those parts of Switzerland which are under (as Lucerne since the year 1291) the immediate authority of the Duke of Austria are no less sorely oppressed and would gladly return to their former liberty in allegiance to the Empire.

\* **Gertrud**, see note, p. 168.

The conversation between Stauffacher and Gertrud rests on Tschudi's narrative. In tone and in some details it resembles the dialogue of Brutus and Portia in Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*, Act II. Sc. 1.

198. **Gebreßen** (here neut.), 'sorrow,' a word borrowed by Schiller from Tschudi, and by this passage introduced into literature as a noble, poetic term, with this figurative meaning and also the original one of 'want,' 'defect.'

203 ff. These lines are reminiscent of Homer: cf. *Odyssey*, xx. 212 and ix. 425.

207. **Edelstz**, 'nobleman's seat,' 'manor-house.'

208. **neu**; the building was new, not rebuilt.

209. Homeric, cf. *Odyssey*, v. 245 and xxi. 44.

**Richtmaß**, Heyne in the Grimm *Wörterbuch*, viii. 901, says this = *Winfelmaß*, um etwas senkrecht zu richten; we may then render it by '(carpenter's) square,' or more loosely by 'rule and measure.'

210. 'Its many windows are bright with light and comfort.'

211, 212. This use of coats-of-arms and wise sayings, mostly in rhyme, was very widespread in Europe and may still be seen on many German and Swiss houses, high up on the gable ends and over the doors; a date and the owner's name are often also given; colored glass windows were often similarly treated; the lines generally contained a religious sentiment, but were sometimes humorous.

214. **wohl**, as in l. 155, 'indeed,' 'it is true.'

219, 220. The governor is Hermann Gessler (see p. 165), whose residence was the castle of Küssnacht, of which ruins are still to be seen near the village of that name in the Canton Schwyz, at the northernmost end of the lake.

221. **wundernd**, personal intransitive, while at present this verb is used only impersonally or reflexively, and here one would have to say *sich wundernd*.

226. **bösmeinend**, 'with evil intent.'

227. **schnell besonnen**, 'with quick presence of mind.'

229. **euers** may be regarded as in construction parallel

to mine, so that Stauffacher says in effect: This house belongs to the Emperor who is your sovereign as well as mine, and I hold it in fief from him. It is also possible to make *mein* neut. nom. sg. agreeing with *Haus* understood; then the meaning will be: This house belongs to the Emperor and, as far as you represent him, it belongs to you, but I hold it in fief. The expression is given by Tschudi with this same ambiguity, which is probably not unintentional.

232. *auf seine eigne Hand*, 'on his own account,' 'independently.'

233. *Stück*, 'live on,' 'live along.'

234. *sich unterstehen*, old for *unternehmen*.

235. *trügiglich*, for modern *trüßig*.

We know now that the Austrian governors do grievous wrong in Uri, Unterwalden, and Lucerne, and our thoughts have followed Tell across the Lake to Schwyz, which seemed the abode of peace and plenty as the play opened. How is it here? The keynote of the answer has been given by Pfeifer's words, which encouraged Stauffacher to persist in opposition to all encroachment, and reminded him of his impending personal danger. Even the honorable, upright, wealthy man, a leader in the community, is no more secure from insult and injury than the meanest. Gertrud has long divined her husband's sorrow and fear, which she now leads him to state explicitly. Stauffacher's attitude toward Gessler is characteristic of the natural disposition of the Swiss toward the governors, to whom as representatives of the Emperor they feel respectful submission to be due.

238. *Herr und Ehemirt*, 'lord and husband,' cf. note to *Wirtin*, l. 187.

240. Cf. note to *GERTRUD*, p. 168.

*rühm' ich mich* (*zu sein*), Homeric naive expression of self-esteem without conceit.

244. *Pergamente*, 'parchments,' on which were written

the charters of their liberties granted by the Emperors ;  
cf. l. 1330.

254. **Schwyz**, sg. for plural = primarily the inhabitants of the Canton Schwyz.

**nicht**, not to be translated. This use of the negative, after another negative, or a word containing the idea of negation, is widespread and historic in German, although sometimes theoretically objected to as a pleonasm. Cf. ll. 803-4, 1535.

**Fürstenhaus** and **Reich**, l. 256, same distinction as in ll. 184 and 185.

257. **gehalten und gethan** (haben), 'steadily did.'

258. **wenn ich lüge**, 'if what I say is not so.'

262. Gessler and Landenberg, being younger sons, had neither a castle of his own.

264. **Reichsfürst**, 'Prince of the Empire,' the lord holding any territory as an immediate vassal of the Emperor as such.

266. **den Göttern in der Christenheit**. In the title *Kaiser des heiligen römischen Reiches deutscher Nation*, the German Emperor claimed the world-sovereignty of the ancient Roman Emperors, which claim received added sanction within Christendom from his being crowned by the Pope. Cf. ll. 305, 870.

267-8. As younger son he had no right to any landed inheritance, but only to the title of knight.

272. **erwarten** = warten or abwarten.

273. **gebüßt** (hat) = gestillt, befriedigt.

277. **Ob** as a preposition with gen. or dat. is obsolete except in poetry and elevated diction ; in usual prose **über** with the acc., or **wegen** with gen.

**Wütere**i = ruchlose Tyrannet.

279. **Urner**, an inhabitant of Uri, or as here an adj. = 'of Uri.'

281. **schafft es** (indef. object) = **treibt es**, 'is acting,' 'is doing,' in the most general sense.

282. **Der Landenberger**, Beringer von Landenberg, cf. l. 72. **überm See**, in Unterwalden.

284-5. **Gewalt-Beginnen**, as a rather loose compound in a play intended to be spoken, is divided between the end of one line and the beginning of the next, a thing which can usually be done only in comic poetry for humorous effect.

**Beginnen**, as the verb *beginnen* is quite frequently used in the sense of *machen, thun*, so its infinitive used as a noun, as here, often has the sense of *That, Thun*.

286. **eurer**, lengthened form of *curr*, gen. plur. of the personal pronoun *bu*, dependent as a partitive genitive on *etliche*. For other instances of this form of the gen. pl. cf. ll. 1871, 2062, 2419.

288. **erledigen**, more common in this sense is now *entledigen*, cf. ll. 2244, 3018.

289. **so**, 'then.'

**acht(e)**, in the general sense of *meinen, denken*, as here, is archaic, Biblical.

**nicht**, only with *verlassen*, not with *gnädig sein*.

291. **gastfreund**, 'intimate friend,' cf. Greek *ξένος* and Latin *hospes*.

294. **angesehen(e) große Herrenleute**, 'distinguished and important men of standing.' As here Schiller very often leaves undeclined the first of two adjectives modifying the same noun. By *Herrenleute* are meant rich landowners who in manner of living, esteem, and influence vie with the nobility.

295. **geheim** is obsolete in this sense of 'familiar,' 'intimate.'

**vertraut**, 'reliable,' 'trusty.'

Resistance to the designs and the acts of Austria, in order to be successful, must be the united resistance of the whole people. The first prompting to this comes from a woman of large mind and noble heart. If she represents the free-born women of Switzerland, there is indeed hope for the land. Though resting on a broad foundation of historical knowledge and of great political insight, the *immediate* motive of Gertrud is purely individual, her husband's personal danger.

"She thinks as a statesman, she feels as a woman, she wills as a heroine."

299. **still**, modifies **denken**, not **verbot**.

303. **friedgewohnte** = an den Frieden gewöhnte.

304. **wagten**, preterite subjunctive, 'do you mean to say that we should venture?' etc.

305. **Herrn der Welt**, see note on l. 266.

306. **Der gute Schein**, 'a good pretext.' They are only waiting for the *appearance* of things to be in their favor (*good*).

312-329. Note the vigorous animated movement of the dialogue in alternating distichs.

312. **Art**. The **Streitart** was the ancient German weapon of foot-soldiers along with the **Morgenstern** (a club with an iron head having numerous projecting spikes) and the **Sellebarde**.

315. **Die Herde schlägt er und die Hirten**, biblical, cf. Matt. xxvi. 31 and Zechariah xiii. 7.

324. Cf. l. 2367.

331. **Herd und Hof**, may be fittingly duplicated by 'hearth and home'; an alliterative phrase like the standard **Haus und Hof** and countless others; cf. ll. 742-3, 895, 1484, 2706, 3287. Many of these formulas have come down essentially unchanged from the oldest times, when perhaps the chief characteristic of poetic form was alliteration.

**Freuden**, dat. pl., but equivalent to the sg. in English. The pl. is very commonly used in such adverbial phrases with a preposition, when no adjective modifies the noun.

332. **Heermacht** = usual **Heeresmacht**.

**Stauffacher** is a man of strong character; he has a vivid sense of justice and is strictly conscientious. Therefore he deliberates and is not hasty in deciding upon action, though we may expect him to be of resolute, intense energy when he has once committed himself. **Gertrud's** clear thinking and almost inspired feeling enlighten and strengthen **Stauffacher's** mind and heart, until his last shrinking—that from the horrors of war—is overcome.

333. *fahr*, probably in the general sense of 'go,' 'travel' as in ll. 17, 348, and usually in this drama, and this even if we suppose him to go by boat part of the way.

*stehenden Fußes*, 'immediately,' an adverbial genitive imitated from the Latin ablative absolute *stante pede*. The tautology of *stehenden Fußes gleich* is natural to Stauffacher's present impatient haste.

334. *mir*, dat. of interest, equivalent to possessive adj., 'of mine.'

*Walther Fürst*, see p. 167.

336. *Bannerherr*, 'banneret,' or 'lord of the banner,' was the bearer of the chief standard of the armed forces of the canton or district when marching against an enemy. Men of dignity and position were chosen for this office.

337. *von Attinghaus*, see p. 165.

The interview, here intended, is omitted later because of the intervention of Melchthal; cf. especially ll. 692-5.

341. *weil*, in the old original sense of 'while,' *bieweil*, *während*.

343. *Gotteshaufe*, probably the monastery at Einsiedeln; see the note to l. 519.

346. *zu äußerst*, adv. of place, 'way out,' 'far out.'

347. *Heerweg*, 'highway,' for usual *Heerstraße*.

This scene has been the exposition of the Yeomen-plot. In the steady onward flow of the dialogue between husband and wife has been developed the decision which is to put into action the power of an entire people. In contrast with the appeals which Scene I made to the outer eye, it is here chiefly the inner vision before which a soul-drama is unfolded. The more epic elements of narration and description are made to serve dramatic ends.

The appearance of Tell with Baumgarten assures us of the successful issue of the struggle with nature and man with which Scene I ends; it thus aptly binds the two scenes together and prepares for the following scene.





## ACT I. SCENE 3.

\* **Altorf** (**Altorf**), chief town of the Canton Uri, half an hour from the southern end of the lake, at which its port is Flüelen.

\* **gediehen** = *vorgerückt*.

\* **Fronvogt**, 'taskmaster,' 'overseer.' *Fron* was compulsory labor for a feudal lord.

\* **Gesellen und Handlanger**, 'workmen and (under)laborers.'

353. **Nicht lang' gefeiert**, 'no long rest.'; *gefieiert*, as also *zugefahren* in the next line, is the past participle used elliptically for the imperative. This substitution, like that of the infinitive or indicative, is commonly emphatic.

356. **Das** is sometimes used in a contemptuous or humorous way of persons, one or more, 'those fellows.'

357. **Geißt das geladen?**, 'do you call that a load?' (lit. 'is that called loaded?'); with verbs of calling, the past participle, as originally in predicate apposition, is used with the sense of the infinitive or a verbal noun.

358. Neither **Lagdiebe** nor the verb **besiehlen**, which it suggested, can be literally rendered by ordinary English terms; yet as the German expression is unusual and poetic, the literal translation would be scarcely any more bold; otherwise **besiehlen** = 'shirk.'

360. **Zwing** originally meant 'jurisdiction,' 'authority,' but is here equivalent to *Zwinghof*, *Herrenhof*, or 'dungeon,' 'keep.' In l. 370 the form **Zwing** with same meaning, for modern *Zwinger*.

362. **anstellig** = *brauchbar, geschickt, tüchtig*.

365. **Eingeweid(e)**, figuratively for *Herz, Gefühl*; cf. English Biblical expression 'bowels of compassion.'

367. **'s ist himmelschreiend** = *es schreit zum Himmel*; cf. Genesis iv. 10.

368. **Amts**, predicate possessive genitive; complete the line with *ist* or with *Pflicht ist*.

370. **Zwing Uri**; cf. l. 360 and note. Some ten miles above Altorf near Amstäg lie on a low hill the ruins of a

castle. Tschudi, whom Schiller follows, places it at Altorf, and relates that Gessler, on being asked its name, replied, *Zwing Uri under die Stägen*, i.e. 'Keep Uri under the yoke (?).' We may imitate the play on the meaning of *Zwing* and *zwingen* by using 'keep' and 'keep down.'

375. 'nauder = einander, cf. note to l. 60.

378. *Fluchgebäude* = verfluchtes Gebäude, cf. ll. 457-8.

380. *Hier ist nicht gut sein*, common negative form of the Biblical phrase, Matt. xvii. 4.

381. Uri is the 'land of freedom,' because this canton was the first to attain immediate dependence upon the Empire.

384. 'fürder,' etymological parallel to English 'further,' obsolete, except in archaistic or elevated diction; *nicht fürder*, 'nevermore.'

385. Stauffacher's exclamation is spoken at the same time with this line.

*Flanken*. The precise meaning of this word here is not easy to determine; as a technical term of the art of fortification it means the side wall of a bastion or of a bastion-like projection at the corner of a large structure, but this sense seems hardly large enough here; in a passage in Scheuchzer, which probably was in Schiller's mind, it means side, flank, or is synonymous with *Strebenfeiler*; on the whole, it seems best to regard *Flanken* as standing here for *Stützen* or *Mauern*, and to render 'these walls, these buttresses.'

388. A natural thought, and also suggested by Scheuchzer, who says, e.g., 'Our fortresses . . . are our high mountains, placed . . . by the omnipotent wisdom of God;' and again, 'I have now several times named the mountains buildings (*Gebäude*). . . The foundations of the mountains are very strong layers (courses or underpinning), upon which the main pillars rest. The *Flanken* or *Flanggen* [i.e., the *Flanken* of l. 385] are like to the *anteridibus* or buttresses.'

The several somewhat distinct parts of this scene are made one by the locality in which they are naturally presented, and by their relation to the collective liberty of the people. The ways of Tell returning home and of Stauffacher going to Walther Fürst lead through

Altorf. By this means this scene is connected with the preceding.

The acts of violence and oppression which the preceding scenes depicted were directed against individuals, and the least important was the one in Uri at the end of Scene 1. Furthermore the last scene encouraged us to hope for active and successful resistance against the tools of Austria. Now here in Uri we begin to realize how profoundly dangerous the situation is. The most sacred collective interests of the whole people are threatened. We see, as it were, the very execution of the Austrian plan to keep down this people and bury its liberty. But we see also the liberty-loving spirit of the people and their growing impatience of oppression.

390. *Fasnachtsaufzug*, 'carnival procession.'

393. *Aufrichten . . . auf hoher Säule*, an unusual expression in the words *aufrichten* for *aufpflanzen*, and *Säule* for *Stange*.

394. in *Altorf*, as Tschudi has it; but Act III. Sc. 3, p. 84, has *bei Altorf*.

407. *noch*, 'at least' or 'only.'

*So*, 'in this case' or 'as things are.'

408. *Der Hut von Österreich*, the ducal coronet of Austria, a crown adorned with twelve golden balls and surmounted by an orb. From l. 403 it would seem that quite an ordinary hat was intended; here is plainly prominent the crown. The relation between the two is not defined.

Note again the pervading distinction in ll. 407-411 between the Empire and Austria, i.e. the House of Habsburg, as in ll. 184-5.

408-9. *Thron*. It was the castle called the Stein zu Baden on the Limmat in the Canton Aargau, which was the residence of Emperor Albrecht when in Switzerland as head of the Habsburg family. Here were granted to Swiss vassals the fiefs of the House of Habsburg. This castle was destroyed by the Swiss in 1415.

411. Obeisance to the hat might be interpreted as formal acknowledgment of Austrian in place of imperial authority.

\* **Tiefe** (der Bühne), 'background.'

As the Keep threatens physical liberty, so the hat and the edict of obeisance to it threaten spiritual liberty. They are designed to degrade and break the very spirit of the people; by one and the same act the Swiss are to accept insult, arbitrary cruelty, and allegiance to Austria. The last two lines reveal the intention of the plain people and their means to its accomplishment; the lines are as it were the introduction of the *motif* of Act II. Sc. 2.

The Crier on his rounds through the Canton appears now naturally enough in Altorf.

414. **Ihr wisset nun Bescheid**, 'Now you know all about it.' We are in doubt as to the presence of Tell and Stauffacher since l. 388, so that the reference in these words is not definite, whether to the state of affairs in Uri, or to Tell's opinion, or to the particular fact of the building of the Zwing. Note the vigor of the dialogue in pregnant one-line speeches, the stichomythy of the Greek drama.

416. The genitive is now construed with **entbehren** only in poetic or elevated diction.

420. **einzig** = einzig mögliche, 'only possible.'

422. **schnellen**, partly with the older meaning of 'violent,' 'rash,' and partly as a serious word-play in connection with **kurz**. The line is modelled on the common proverb **Gestrengere Herren regieren nicht lange**.

424. This is still a strict legal requirement especially in Uri. Kuenen states that disregard of it in January, 1879, was the cause of the conflagration which consumed the greater part of the town of Meiringen in the Haslithal.

431. **die Lande**, the Cantons. The oldest plural of **Land** was **Land**; then from the fourteenth century at least **Länder** came into use and is now the sole form in common use; the form **Landt** arose in the seventeenth century, in poetic and elevated diction, and is established as an ordinary prose word only in this present sense of the parts of a political whole.

438-9. Contain a clear indication of the plan of self-liberation.

442. *was*, for *was auch*, 'whatever.'

442-5. The rhymes are employed here after Shakespeare's example to emphasize the conclusion of the dialogue and the importance of Tell's words, which disclose to us Tell's character and provide us with an explanation of his non-appearance in Act II. Sc. 2.

445. *es soll an mir nicht fehlen*, 'I shall not be found wanting.'

This forceful dialogue between Stauffacher and Tell presents to us in further measure and with great definiteness their standpoints and their characters. Stauffacher is resolutely in favor of collective action by the people, and of previous joint deliberation. Tell will have nothing to do with any such general conference or council. At first he rejects the thought of any uprising at all against the governors, but afterwards he declares his readiness to do any individual deed to which the need of his country shall summon him. This conversation explains Tell's absence from the meeting at the Rütli in Act II. Sc. 2.

Tell has commonly been described by critics and commentators as laconic, taciturn. But the man who here speaks appears to be very ready to express himself on general interests, not only vigorously but fluently; there is here no lack of words, on occasion. He seems to be given to reflection and discussion, of which the fruits are pregnant, proverb-like sayings, wherein this conversation (as others of Tell also) so abounds. In concrete cases he does not always think clearly; several of the proverb-like utterances in which he here states his present view of his own case are shown by his later experience to be very wrong. He is a man of action, rather than of council.

This brief glimpse of Bertha von Bruneck (a relative of Gessler, who, as we shall learn in Act II. Sc. 1, has a residence in Altorf), and the earlier allusions to the

Baron von Attinghausen are preparing for the full exposition of the Nobles-plot. Here is a lady of noble birth whose sympathy is with the oppressed, and for whom the symbol of tyranny now rising before us is accursed.

This scene is one of the three (the others being Act III. Sc. 3 and Act IV. Sc. 2) in which representatives of all three plots appear, but here without concentration.

446. **Was giebt's?** Counts as an entire line because of the pause in speech amid the running and excitement.

447. The fall shows us that Zwing Uri is in fact a **Fluchgebäude**, as the master-mason named it in l. 378.

450. **Mit eurem Golde = Fort (or Gsch) mit eurem Golde.** **Mit** is not infrequently used in this way with omitted verb (or adverb) of motion to express surprise, vexation, or anger.

**euch**, 'for you,' 'in your opinion.' **euch** and **ihr** in the following lines are plural, referring to the Austrian nobles, with whose sentiments the master-mason wrongly identifies those of Bertha.

#### ACT I. SCENE 4.

\* **Walther Fürst** and **Arnold vom Melchtal**, see p. 167.

466. **Dem frechen Buben**, dative instead of possessive genitive with **Finger**, l. 469, as also **mir** with **Döfen**. **Bube**, as in **Sandbube**, page 4, foot, both here and in l. 470 is 'boy' in the sense of 'servant'; he is afterward called **Bot** and **Knecht**.

468. **Bogts**. It was Beringer von Landenberg, not Gessler. Cf. ll. 72, 282.

**auf n. f. w.**, cf. l. 2882.

471. **Von eurer Obrigkeit**, "by one in authority over you."

473. **Wie schwer sie (auch) war**, cf. note on **was (auch)**, l. 190.

**Buße**, in the old legal sense of 'fine,' 'penalty.'

478. **spannen**, construed with **von**, 'unhitch.'

483. **wir (Alten)**, emphatic contrast to **Jugend**, l. 484.

487. **gehässig**, here in the obsolete active sense of 'full of hatred,' while now the word is restricted to the sense of

'producing hate,' 'hateful,' or to the full passive sense of *verhaft.*

490. *schüße*, subjunctive of characteristic.

491. *hinaüber (gehen)*, over the mountains from Uri to Unterwalden.

492. Cf. ll. 190-2, 1437, 1458-9.

493. *Walde*, i.e. the *Sternwalb* (l. 1196), by which the Canton Unterwalden is divided into two parts, *ob* (above) *dem Walb* and *nib* (below) *dem Walb*; cf. ll. 545, 717. Melchthal's home was near Kerns on the border of this forest. In *Unterwalden unter* has the meaning of *zwischen*, among; in official documents in Latin the inhabitants are called *Intramontani*.

497. *sich* = einander.

501. *schwänen*, to have forebodings like the swan, which in legend is a prophetic bird.

502. *rauscht* = rassel, ein Geräusch macht.

505. *thät'* and *hätten*, l. 506, subjunctive, to soften the positiveness of the assertion, 'it may soon be necessary,' (Wh. § 332, 3a.)

506. In the less populous mountain districts of Switzerland, as also of Norway, even now bolts and locks are little used; simplicity and confidence are so universal and complete.

513. *Sieh*, as a general interjection, 'Oh!'

*mir wird so wohl*, 'I begin to feel so happy.'

514. *geht-auf*, 'opens,' 'expands.'

516. *Wirtin*, cf. note to l. 187.

519. (Sanct) *Meinrads Zell* is the present monastery of Our Lady at Einsiedeln, founded by St. Meinrad (Meinard, Meginhard), who, according to the legend, belonged to the Hohenzollern family and was born about 800 A.D. He came first as a monk from the monastery at Reichenau to the foot of the mountain Ezel in Schwyz, and there built him a hermit's cell in the year 832, where in January, 861, he was murdered by two robbers. In 946 Otto the Great founded the monastery on that spot. It has ever since the building of that first cell been a place of pilgrimage, and is now visited by about 200,000 pilgrims annually.

**Welfland**, here = Italy.

521. **Flüelen** (pronounce Flüen), see note on Altorf, \*190.

524. **erstaunlich(es) neues Werk**, cf. ll. 379 and following.

526. **es**, i.e. the whole story, all our trouble.

528. **seit Menschenedenen**, for usual **seit Menschengedenen**, 'since time immemorial.'

529. **fest war keine Wohnung** = **keine Wohnung hielt fest**, 'held captive.'

530. **Mit Namen** = mit dem rechten Namen.

531. **verhalten**, for usual **vorenthalten**, **verhehlen**, or **verschweigen**, 'keep from you.'

536. **Ziel**, in the now less common sense of **Grenze**, **Ende**.

537. **von uralter her**, 'from the most ancient times.' The usual phrase is **von alter her**, in which **alter** is an adverbial genitive used as object of a preposition. The prefix **ur-** has its usual strengthening force.

540-1. **Treiben**, in two different meanings: **trieb** (540) has as its object **seine Herde** understood, while **treiben** (541), with the indefinite obj. **es**, means 'to drive (things),' 'to carry on,' 'to act.'

542-4. A definite statement of the attitude of the nobility, as to which we are thus led to expect the further information that is given to us by the completion of the exposition in II. 1.

547. **hauste**, here probably in the neutral sense of 'resided.'

549. **Alzellen**, in Nid dem Wald; cf. l. 66.

550. 'He tried to wrong with shameful impropriety.'

553. **bescheidner**, here in the older sense of instructed, informed, and hence 'sensible,' 'discreet,' 'prudent,' rather than the modern 'modest.'

554. Cf. l. 2292.

555. **Eidam**, now obsolete in ordinary prose, = **Schwieger-sohn**.

556. As Walther Fürst concealed Melchthal. The oppressed, no less than the tyrants (l. 497), aid one another.

558. **Sarnen**, the chief town of Ob dem Wald and the residence of Landenberg.



563. **gilt was**, 'has no little weight'; **was** for *etwas*.
565. **büßte**, 'fined,' 'punished,' here active in meaning.
569. **wie steht's um den?** = *wie steht's mit ihm?*
571. **Zur Stelle schaffen** (bringen) = 'produce,' 'bring forward.'
586. **ist ausgeflossen**, 'has ceased to flow,' 'has emptied itself.'
588. **Schmerzens**. This form of the genitive of *Schmerz* is no longer usual, except as it is retained in compound words of which it is the first member.
- 589-602. Compare the opening lines of Book III of Milton's *Paradise Lost*.
593. **fühlend**, not 'feeling his way' or 'groping,' but rather *sein Unglück empfindend*, 'feeling (conscious of) all his loss,' in contrast with the plants and animals just alluded to.
595. **Schmelz**, 'enamel,' because of the brilliant and variegated hues of the flowers that so often cover Alpine fields.
596. **roten Firnen**, here 'red snow-peaks,' glowing with the first light of the rising or the last of the setting sun; the well-known 'Alpine glow,' *Alpenglühfen*.
599. **jammernd**, for *bejammernnd*, *mitleibig*.
- frische**, 'sound.'
613. **denken**, used with *auf*, implies wish, aspiration, desire, volition, while with *an* it is purely intellectual, although both are expressed in English by 'think of.'

622-3. **Wenn . . . fühle**, 'if only I may cool,' etc.

The participants in this scene, Melchthal, Stauffacher (in whose person this scene is connected with Scene 3), and Fürst, are respectively representatives, in origin, of the three Cantons, in years, of youth, mature manhood, and old age, in personality of passionate energy, manly prudence and counsel, and of anxious caution. The portion of the scene which here culminates in Melchthal's outburst of feeling—a lyric lament of great power and beauty—belongs technically to the general exposition. The outrages committed by the governors are reviewed and a new extreme case detailed. The third governor, Landenberg, is seen to be no less en-

vious, rapacious and cruel than Gessler. The tyrannical oppression is rising in intensity and the governors assist one another. The distress is common to all the land and all its inhabitants. Is there no hope? The resentment of the people is rising too. The conversation between Stauffacher and Fürst is charged with noble indignation and passion, while Melchthal's feeling knows no bounds.

625. *auf* . . . *Herrenburg*, 'in his lordly keep.'

627. *wohnt*', pret. subj. in conditional clause.

628. The Schreckhorn (13,386 feet high) and the Jungfrau (13,671 feet high) are two peaks of the Bernese Alps. They were regarded as inaccessible until ascended, the latter in 1811 and the former in 1861.

629. *verschleiert* has commonly been understood by commentators of clouds, but this seems hardly adequate and the present editor would prefer to understand it of the snow as a white virginal veil, with suggestion also of inaccessibility.

*ich mache*, the pres. indic., with future meaning, substituted in the conclusion for the pret. subj., to make the thought more emphatic.

639. *Es*, the state of affairs, the evil, the tyranny.

*auf seinem Gipfel*, 'at its apex,' 'at its worst.'

641. *Augenstern* is used of the pupil of the eye and by poets of the whole eye.

645. *ward*, see note on line 149.

646. *Notwehr*, lit. 'weapon in need,' 'weapon for self-defense.'

647. *stellt sich*, 'takes his stand,' 'stands at bay.'

649. Cf. ll. 1499-1500. The thought is that in the frenzy of its extreme danger the chamois dashes back over the hunter or between him and the wall of rock and pushes him over the edge. That this is cool self-defense is hardly a fact, although firmly believed by the Swiss; but instances of its being blindly done cannot be denied.

652. *Duldsam*, for prose *geduldig*.

653. (*wenn er gereizt* (wird)).

654. **schleudert** . . . **zu**, sep. verb, 'hurls towards.'
655. **Land**, cf. note to l. 431.
- 657-8. Uri is represented by Fürst, Unterwalden by Melchthal, while Stauffacher is from Schwyz.
- Die alten Bünde**, see Introd. pp. xxxvi, xlvi, and xlix.
659. **Freundschaft**, in its older sense of **Verwandschaft**, 'kindred'; 'I have many kinsmen,' etc., cf. ll. 1034 and 1455.
661. **Rüden**, in the sense of **Rückhalt**, 'support,' 'backing' is a favorite expression with Schiller; here derived perhaps from Tschudi.
662. **fromme** = **gute**.
665. **Landsgemeinde** = **Landesversammlung**, 'assembly of the canton'; the annual meeting of all the citizens of the canton to deliberate as to its interests and to elect its magistrates.
- 668-9. **mit treibt**, belongs to the two contrasted subjects **Blut** and **Gewalt**, which in prose would have **sondern** between them.
670. **Was auch**, 'that which even.'
- 673-4. **ehre** and **bewache**, see note on **schütze**, l. 490.
677. **frisch**, as in l. 599.
- Kreisen**, 'orbits,' 'sockets.'
682. **in gleicher Mitschuld und Verdammnis**, 'in equal joint guilt and condemnation'; in part a reminiscence of Luke xxiii. 40.
683. His attitude is as in l. 658.
685. **Sillinen** (now **Sillen**), accent on the first syllable; the village is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours above or south of Altorf, on the right bank of the Reuss. There remains one tower of the old castle.
- Attinghausen**, see p. 165.
687. **dem Waldgebirg**, in effect **den Waldstätten**.
688. Probably Melchthal addresses first Fürst and then Stauffacher.
689. **echte Währung**, 'sterling value.'
692. **was**, with force of **warum**. Melchthal does not trust the nobility, because the younger nobles, of whom Rudenz

is representative, may hold to Austria, as we shall learn in Act II. Sc. 1.

694. **wären . . . Land!**, ordinarily understood as a wish that there were no nobles; but it might be 'What if we were after all alone in the land!'

699. **entstehn**, in the old and poetic sense of *fernstehen*, *mangeln*.

701. **Obmann**, i.e. ein Mann, der über den Parteien steht, 'arbitrator,' 'umpire'; the ordinary term is *Schiedsrichter*.

704-5. With this bold declaration, which is the more forcible because uttered by the cautious Walther Fürst, the alliance is formed in the persons of these three representative men.

710. **gewähren**, intrans. in the sense of *Gewähr leisten*, *bürgen*, *einsetzen*; the commoner trans. meaning of *gestatten* occurs in l. 713.

711. **Schliche**, here in the literal original sense of 'secret paths,' 'by-paths,' not in the ordinary figurative meaning of 'tricks,' 'artifices.'

717. **der Azeiler** = Baumgarten, cf. l. 66 and note, and also note to l. 52.

**nid dem Wald**, see note to l. 493.

721. See map and notes of Act I. Sc. 1.

725. **Rhthenstein** is a single column of rock about eighty feet high, projecting from the lake a little south of Brunnen. On it there was placed, right after the centennial anniversary of the poet's birth, the inscription *Dem Sänger Lessé, F. Schiller, die Urkantone, 1859*. Cf. n. l. 39 and ill. opp. p. 162.

**grad' über** = gerade gegenüber.

727. **Das Rütli** (long *ü*), also *Grütli*, derived from the Swiss form of the verb *reuten*, North German *roden*, to clear, to root out, is a meadow-clearing on the western shore of the lake, a little south of Selisberg, surrounded by rocky walls, trees, and bushes. This traditional cradle of Swiss liberty is now the property of the nation, having been bought by subscription of the school-children of Switzerland.

729. Distinguish carefully *die Mark* (two meanings), *die Mark*, and *das Mark*.



735. *herzeinig*, 'one at heart.'

736. *gemeinsam das Gemeine*, 'in common—the common good'; effective repetition for emphasis.

734–737. The precise time of meeting and the watchword are not discussed; it is assumed that an agreement as to these can easily be had by means of messengers.

738. Speaks first to Walther Fürst.

741. *zusammenflechten*, for prose in *einander legen*.

742–3. *zu Schutz und Trutz*, 'for defense and defiance,' 'for offense and defense.'

746 ff. The realization of this prophetic outburst is seen in the Fifth Act. *erheben* and *fallen* are both in the clause of condition. Rhyme is again used in these important lines that conclude the act, cf. note to l. 442–5.

747. This custom is most ancient and universal. Cf. ll. 1421, 1422.

749. Cf. l. 3085 and Act V. Sc. 3.

751. 'In thy night shall be the bright day' (of liberty).

The first portion of the scene was charged with feeling, the second is dominated by the will, and culminates in the alliance of the three representative men, with faith in God, and in behalf of the three Cantons. Melchthal leads the way with moving eloquence, at first blindly vehement, then calmer, clear, and convincing. Fürst is at the opposite pole of reserve and caution. Stauffacher occupies the less conspicuous but more reasonable middle ground. The three men show three typical forms of the relations existing between the people and the nobility. Fürst has the standpoint of the era now closing, that the interests of both are one, that the people can do nothing without the nobles. Melchthal, viewing the two classes in radical opposition, rejects all thought of aid from the nobility. Stauffacher, seeing things more as they really are, desires a voluntary rising of the people, but hopes that the nobles will make the cause of the people their own. Fürst finally acknowledges the necessity of independent action, and now displays resolute decision and wisdom in planning.

The conference concludes with the solemn vow of union, wherein our inner vision sees the powers of the entire people united. Again, in Melchthal's prophecy of the day of freedom does a broad band of hope break in upon the gloom.

So far as Act I contains the exposition (see *Introd.* pp. lxiv-lxxi) it answers to Schiller's own definition of the best sort of exposition, for it also develops the plot.

The condition of land and people under the lawless arbitrary rule of the Austrian governors is presented to us partly in narration and partly in acts which we behold. One governor has attempted to violate the sanctity of the family; another with revolting cruelty has outraged the right and person of a respected old man; a third, Gessler, is planning to destroy the rights and liberties of the whole people. All three are avaricious, proud, unscrupulous. But the real oppressor is the Emperor, the Duke of Austria, who, faithless to his duty as emperor, desires to make the Swiss Cantons own allegiance to the House of Austria, and is angered by their refusal, whether expressed or tacit.

The Swiss spirit of liberty and some promise of their power of resistance is also revealed to us in the plans and the acts of individuals, both as such and as symbolizing the popular feeling and will.

Act I is given in part to the exposition of the Tell-plot, but chiefly to that of the Yeomen-plot. The climax of the act is therefore the alliance of Fürst, Stauffacher, and Melchthal in Scene 4. The movement leading to this climax starts in the relation of Gessler to Stauffacher as realized by the latter in Scene 2. Gessler hates Stauffacher's patriotism, covets his property, and means to ruin him. No individual alone can prevent such ruin in his own case; there must be common action of the whole land. In order to secure common action there must be previous counselling. Thus does Gertrud Stauffacher urge upon her husband the end and



the means of the Yeomen-plot. The foundation of the league is in part individual self-defense and self-preservation ; but it rests also on the common cause, the cause of country, the cause of liberty, and by this it is hallowed.

For the Tell-plot this act introduces the title-hero. Scene 1 prepares for Scene 3, this for Act III. Sc. 3, and leading qualities in Tell's character are strongly drawn.

In passing mention of Attinghausen and the brief appearance of Bertha von Bruneck hints are given of the Nobles-plot.



SEAL OF URI, 1291.

## ACT II.

ARGUMENT.—The *first* scene is in the great hall of the baronial manor of Attinghausen. The aged patriotic Swiss Baron, feeling that his death is not remote, reproaches his young nephew and heir, Rudenz, with deserting the cause of his native land for the vain pomp of the Austrian court. Rudenz is blinded by his love for Bertha, whom he mistakenly supposes to be Austrian in sentiment, and can see power and honor only in allegiance to Austria. He therefore will not heed his uncle's wise and heartfelt remonstrances, but, starting to go to Gessler in Altorf, he leaves the Baron in despair of the national cause.

The *second* scene makes us witnesses of the midnight meeting at the Rütli and the formal organization of the confederation. The Unterwaldeners, led by Melchthal, come first, then Stauffacher and they of Schwyz. While these all are waiting for the men of Uri, Melchthal tells of his movements and his seeing his blind father. When the men of Uri are come, the assembly is duly constituted. Stauffacher recites the origin, history, and liberty of the Swiss, and Conrad Hunn tells of the formal refusal of the Emperor to confirm their liberty. Since now it is plain that only the way of forcible resistance is open, the assembly decides upon an uprising at Christmas, for the sake of capturing the strongholds and expelling the Austrian governors. Before separating, these representatives of the three Forest Cantons swear a solemn oath to remain united and free, in reliance on God and fearlessness of man.

## SCENE I.

The two scenes of this act occur on one and the same day, the first in the morning, the second in the night. This day is probably about midway between October 28 and November 19; Tschudi makes it November 8.

\* **Edelhof.** On a hill near Attinghausen, a little south of Altorf on the left bank of the Reuss, may still be seen the ruins of the baronial residence Schweinsberg.





\* **Freiherrn von Attinghausen**, see p. 165.

\* **Ruoni**, see p. 167 and Act I. Sc. 1.

\* **Ulrich von Rudenz**, see p. 166.

\* **Mit Rechen und Senfen**. In the Alps second-growth hay is cut very late in the valley-bottoms, but hardly so late as November. Cf. also l. 1913.

754. **Frühtrunk**, 'early draught,' 'morning-cup.' The word is not else in use, and its meaning is undefined. Schiller probably understood it to consist of wine or cider.

757. Cf. l. 911.

758. **den Schaffner (= Verwalter) machen**, 'act the part of steward.'

761. **in enger stets und engerm Kreis**, 'within a narrower and ever narrower circle,' 'within a circle ever closing in upon me'; thus he indicates the narrowing of his activity from the wide world successively to his estate, his castle, his room, and finally to the center of repose, l. 762, in the coffin. Note that the declensional ending is expressed with only one of the comparatives.

765. **Ich bring's euch**, 'I drink your health,' 'I pledge you.'

**Junter**, 'young squire.'

**Es geht** [comes] (bei uns) . . . **Herzen** = wie wir ein Herz sind, so trinken wir auch aus einem Becher.

767. **Kinder**, 'boys.'

**wenn's Feierabend ist**, 'when the evening-rest has come.'

The locality of this scene pictures to us the life of the nobility, as the houses of Stauffacher and Fürst that of well-to-do yeomen. We see first in this brief introduction the patriarchal character of the generation of nobles now just passing away, while the bearing of Rudenz betrays a different spirit.

770. **Herrenburg**, cf. note to l. 625. Gessler had temporary quarters in a tower at Altorf, while Zwing-Uri was building; of this tower Attinghausen is made to speak as a well-equipped castle or château. The residence proper of Gessler was in Küssnacht.

772. **Hast du's so eilig?** = Hast du solche Eile?

773-4. **ſie erſparen an**, 'save it out of,' 'gain it at the expense of.'

778. **Zur Fremde**, 'a strange place, 'foreign.' With *werden* the predicate noun is often put in the dative after *zu*.

**Uli**, diminutive of *Ulrich*.

779. **In Seide**. Silk costumes were used at court festivals, while leather was the ordinary outer dress of the knights of the time.

780. 'You proudly display the peacock's feather.' This was a symbol of attachment to Austria, because the Austrian dukes were wont to wear peacock's feathers.

781. **Purpurmantel**. Red was the color of Austria; its coat-of-arms had a red field with a silver bar.

782. **Sandmann**, cf. note to l. 50. The Baron noticed in silence the rejection by Rudenz of the *Frühtrunk*, but now he speaks. This and the *wir* and *unser* of lines 789 and 792 place him clearly on the side of the people.'

785. **ſich nimmt**, 'takes to himself,' 'assumes,' is emphatic.

797. Supply *hat* at end of line.

798. **loſſete**, pret. subj. for *würde kosten*.

**ein einzig(es) leichtes Wort**, viz. the "Yes" of allegiance to Austria.

801-2. Aimed at his uncle.

**halten** = *zuhalten*, 'hold shut,' 'keep closed.'

804. **nicht**, see note on *nicht*, l. 254.

805. **Wie — alle — doch gethan**, cf. l. 3054.

806. **Wohl thut es ihnen**, 'it makes them feel good.'

**Herrenbank**, 'nobles' bench.' In court and legislative sessions knights and free peasants had equal vote and equal right, which would not so continue under Austrian rule.

808. They were so remote from the Emperor, as such, as not to feel his power.

811. **Person**, 'rôle,' 'part.'

813. **Sandammann**, '*chief-magistrate* of a canton,' chosen annually by the people. *Ummann* is a form of *Amtmann*.

**Bannerherr**, see l. 336 and note.

817. **Lager**, for *Hoſlager*, 'court' of a prince.

818. **Peir** (pronounced *Pär*), 'peer.' In the Germanic feudal state 'peers' were originally such vassals as could be judged in matters of their fiefs only by their equals.

819. **zu Gericht zu sitzen**, 'to hold court.'

824. **Fremdlinge**, 'foreigners,' the Austrian knights of the retinues of the governors.

825. **Bauernadel**, 'peasant-nobility.'

826-7. Albrecht I. fought in 1301 against Count Rudolf of the Palatinate, in 1304 against King Wenzel of Bohemia, and in 1307 against Friedrich of Thuringia.

833. **Halle**, 'hall,' the great room of the castle.

834. **Drommete** is an archaic and poetical form of *Trompete*.

In its unitary character this scene is comparable to Act I. Sc. 2 and Act III. Sc. 2. All three are dialogues in which one participant desires to move the other to a decision. Here Attinghausen seeks to win the soul of his nephew and heir, but apparently in vain, since love and ambition seem to prevail over the ideals of liberty and country. This first portion of the dialogue between Attinghausen and Rudenz consists of the former's accusations and the latter's defense. The charges are that Rudenz is a stranger to his home, a renegade to his country, intent on frivolous pleasure and princely favor; the defense is that the leaders of the people are controlled only by self-interest in their resistance to Austria, and that only on the side of Austria can Rudenz obtain the honors that befit him. As he speaks, we are strongly impressed with the power and wealth of the Duke of Austria. Rudenz is young and, we fear, hasty, weak, unwise. Has the school of experience naught in store for him?

843. **Heim sehnen**, 'feel homeward longing.' Proverbial is the homesickness of the Swiss, especially on hearing the Kuhreihen in any land however remote.

844. **Herdeureihen** = *Kuhreihen*.

846. **Schmerzensehnsucht** = *schmerzliche Sehnsucht* or *Schmerz und Sehnsucht*.

847. **dir anflingt**, 'strikes your ear.'

848. **Der Trieb des Vaterlands**, 'the (instinctive) love of country.'

855. **Fürstentnecht**, 'servant (or slave) of a prince.'

856. **Da** (*doch*), 'while,' adversative.

**Selbstherr**, 'your own master.'

861. **Der Letzte**. Not historical, since the family line continued half a century longer. The change is for dramatic impressiveness.

863. **mitgeben**, in accordance with custom, he being the last male member of his house.

865. **brechend**(*es*), lit. 'breaking,' while in English we must say 'failing' or 'closing.'

866. This line has six feet.

**Lehenhof**, 'court of fiefs,' the court at which fiefs were bestowed upon vassals.

867-8. Rudenz would give away his inheritance to Austria, and receive it back as a fief to be held by him as a vassal.

870. **Die Welt gehört ihm**, in so far as in the title of Emperor the kings of Germany laid claim to the world-sovereignty of the ancient Roman Empire; cf. note on l. 266.

871. 'be stiffly and stubbornly obstinate in.'

872. **Ländertette**. Schiller made the following note on the effort of Albrecht as Count of Habsburg and Duke of Austria to increase the territorial possessions of his family:

„Kreis von Ländereien . . . die er um die Waldstätte herumschlingt :

Zug	Unter Schweiz	Einstedeln
Luzern	Uri	Glarus
Entlibücher	Walb Urfern	Disentis

Um diese kostspieligen Käufe zu machen, muß er alle seine Länder schwer beschäzen und besteuern.“

874-5. The poet follows Tschudi and Müller, who state that Albrecht forced the people to attend the weekly markets in Lucerne and Zug, upon which he levied duties, while on the traffic by pack-horse over the Gotthard-pass he levied tolls. The courts were his, because he appointed the judges.

881. **kein Kaiser**, i.e. no Emperor not a member of the Habsburg family.

882. **Was ist zu geben an**, 'what reliance is to be placed on.'

884. **des Adlers** = **des Reichsadlers**, the symbol of the Empire.

885. The mortgaging and alienating from the Empire of rights, domains, and offices, cities and countries, was frequent and disastrous. Adolf von Nassau mortgaged the Abbey of Essen to the Prince Elector of Cologne, and other ecclesiastical foundations to the Archbishop of Trèves. Ludwig the Bavarian mortgaged in 1315 the free city Eger to Johann of Bohemia, and the city was never thereafter redeemed.

891. Prose **hoch, sich um den mächtigen Erbherrn wohl verdient machen**, 'to deserve well at the hands of the powerful hereditary lord.'

892. **Geist** = **ist**.

889-892. The thought is: the emperors are unable permanently to reward services, since the office passes from one family to another by election, but whoever serves well the hereditary power of some one family, sows seed for future harvests.

893. **Bist**, 'do you claim.'

896-7. The disposition of Lucerne we know from Pfeiffer's words at the opening of Sc. 2 of Act I. Lucerne had been sold in 1291 by the Abbey of Murbach in Alsace to the Habsburg family.

900. 'forbid the hunting of the higher game, both bird and beast.'

901. **Schlagbaum**, 'toll-bar,' 'toll-gate.'

903. **Mit unsrer Armut**, i.e. with money extorted from us, poor as we are.

904. **Mit unserm Blute**, i.e. as soldiers in Austrian service.

906. **wohlfeiler**. The price is the same in either case, but **Freiheit** is an infinitely greater good than **Frechtenschaft**.

909. The Baron calls Rudenz „**Knabe**“ in return for the latter's scornful „**Ein Volk der Hirten.**“

911. **Faenza**, German form of Faenza, Fayence, a city in Italy a little southwest of Ravenna. It was conquered in 1240-41 by the Emperor Friedrich II., to whose help the Forest Cantons sent 600 men, in return for a charter (referred to in the next scene) and payment in advance. The presence of the Baron is Schiller's invention, possible because of his increased age; see p. 165.

919. **zu**, 'by.'

920. **Das** and **des**, both emphatic as demonstrative pronouns, 'this.'

927. **lang' nicht mehr**, 'not for a long time now.'

934. **der Liebe Sella**, 'cords of love,' Biblical, Hosea xi. 4.

935. **Fräulein**, in the original sense of 'noble young lady'; so also **Ritterfräulein**, l. 938, which can hardly be rendered differently.

941. **deiner Unschuld**, 'for your innocence,' i.e. for you in your innocence (simplicity, inexperience, unsuspecting guilelessness). Cf. ll. 1662-1672.

944. **erhalten** = 'zurückhalten,' 'check,' 'restrain.'

948. **strebend** modifies **Jugend**, l. 947.

958. This line has six feet.

The second portion of the conversation, which is the climax of the scene, turns on the thoughts of liberty and native land. The noble patriarch strives to lead Rudenz to appreciation of the value of these grand realities and ideals. His solemn rebukes and exhortations Attinghausen concludes by disclosing his knowledge that the goal of Rudenz' mistaken efforts is Bertha and her love, and that Rudenz is but a blind tool of Austrian plans.

Attinghausen's final monologue, in lament and in prophecy, is most pathetic. But the question comes to us: May not the "new" era be a better era?

#### ACT II. SCENE 2.

\* **Eine Biese**, the Rütli, see note to l. 727.

\* **Rondregnbogen**, 'lunar rainbow.'

\* For the names see pp. 166-168.

959. **nach** = *nachgefolgt* in the sense of the imperative.
960. **Den Fels**, i.e. the Selisberg beneath which the Rütli lies. **Seli** is the diminutive of **See**.
- \* **Windlichtern**, 'torches,' *Fackeln, die im Winde nicht verlöschen*.
962. **Landmann**, here = *Landsmann*, 'man of the Canton.'
964. **Feuertwächter**, rare for prose *Nachtwächter*.
965. **Selisberg**, here referring to a little village on the height of the same name.
966. **Reitenglöcklein**, 'matin-bell.' The line has six feet.
967. **Schwyzerland**, 'Schwyz,' the Canton.
969. **Gehn, zünden an**, subjunctive as imperative.
984. **weit umgehen**, 'make a wide circuit.' In this sense *um'gehen* is a separable compound with accent on the first syllable, although the rhythm accents here the second syllable.
985. **Rundschafft**, 'spies,' collective abstract singular for concrete plural *Rundschaffter*.
986. **Wort**, for prose *Lösungswort*, or *die Lösung*.
- \* **nach der Tiefe**, see note on *Tiefe*, p. 193.
- \* **drei andere Landleute**. This would seem to be a mistake of the poet in writing, or a misprint, for *vier*, since otherwise only ten men of Schwyz are present, including *Stauffacher*, and there would be only thirty-two in all, in place of the thirty-three expressly mentioned after line 1097.
992. Note the strength of *Stauffacher's* leadership in repressing at once all personal revengefulness and thus giving to the conference the character of calm deliberation.
995. **für gemeine Sach'**, for *für die gemeine Sache*, on account of the meter.
998. **Surennen**, here with accent on the second syllable, although the form in general use is *Süränen*, name of a mountain ridge and pass between Uri and Unterwalden, the pass leading from Altorf to Engelberg.
1000. **Lämmergeier**, 'lām'mergeir,' see this word in Webster's Dictionary. The statement that this bird is now extinct in Switzerland is without foundation.
1001. **Alpentrist**, '(Alpine) pasture,' see note on *Ratten*, p. 171.

1002. **Engelberg**, name of a valley, a village, and a monastery of the Canton Unterwalden.

1004. **mit der Gletscher Milch** = mit der Milch der Gletscher, for mit milchweissem Gletscherwasser. The water flowing from beneath glaciers is very often whitish, because carrying pulverized stone in suspension.

1005. **Runsen** (die Runse), in origin an Allemannic word, for Rinsal, 'channels,' 'gullies'; now rather freely used in literature.

1006. **einsamen**, because the herdsmen must long before this have gone down from the highest pastures.

1011. **Ehrfurcht** is object.

1013. **Entrüftet** modifies as predicate **Seelen**.

1014. **Ob**, see note on l. 277.

1017. This comparison was suggested by Ebel's observation of a certain regularity in the winds over all lakes that lie in the direction of transverse valleys at the foot of the Alps on either the northern or the southern side.

1021. **tragen**, for prose **ertragen**.

1034. **mit die** = **meine**.

**Bettern**, 'relatives,' cf. l. 659.

1036. **auf fremdem Stroh**, for **auf dem Stroh von Fremden**.

1038. Cf. l. 2345.

1042. **Krümme**, on account of the meter for prose **Krümungen**.

1043. In translation insert 'but that' before **ich spähte**. This idiomatic expression, quite common in German, is ordinarily explained as a confusion of two constructions: (1) **Jedes Thal, wie versteckt es auch war, ich spähte es aus**; and (2) **Kein Thal war so versteckt, daß ich es nicht ausspähte**.

1053. **mit Herz und Mund**, 'with heart and tongue (lit. mouth),' i.e. in feeling (thought) and in word, secretly and openly, about equivalent to **mit Herz und Hand**.

1056. **Rohberg**, see note to l. 77.

**Sarnen**. The village of this name lies at the northern end of Lake Sarnen in Unterwalden; on a hill near the village stood the castle of Beringer of Landenberg.



1068. **gerächten**, here about = 'good,' von rechter Art, rechtlich, bieder.

1072. **Mei(e)r**, here to be taken as a proper family name. The word means literally 'steward,' 'manager,' 'overseer'; and since this office in the case of large estates often became hereditary, the name of the office easily became a family name. In origin the word is a loan-word from Latin *major*, from which come also Eng. major, major-domc, and mayor.

1075. Struthan von Winkelried had distinguished himself in 1240 before Fayence (Favenz). Having thereafter been exiled for murder, he is said by tradition to have secured permission to return to his country, through promising to kill a dragon living near *Wylor* (Weiler = hamlet, small village). He slew the monster, but was poisoned to death by its blood. See also n. to Dramatis Personæ.

1076. **Weiler**, precisely *Obweiler*, in a valley near Alpnach not far from Rossberg, where the cave of the dragon is still pointed out.

1077. **Stranf**, for usual prose *Kampf*.

1078. **hinter**, 'beyond,' i.e. in Obwalden.

**Klosterleute vom Engelberg** = *Leute* (people, vassals) des Klosters vom Engelberg.

1080. **eigne** (owned) *Leute* = *Leibeigene*, 'serfs.' In general the serfs of a religious community had better conditions than those of a lay lord.

1082. **sind . . . wohl berufen**, 'are of good repute,' for prose *stehen . . . in gutem Rufe*.

1084. **Mit seinem Leibe pflichtig** ('bound,' 'subject'), 'in servitude,' 'a serf,' = *Leibeigen*.

**Erden**. Formerly many feminine nouns of this declension took the ending in the gen. and dat. sg., like the masculines.

1086. **Reding**. The Reding family is notable in Swiss history; J. von Müller mentions Itel Reding as Landammann of Schwyz early in the fifteenth century; in Schiller's own time Aloys von Reding was a leader of his Canton Schwyz in the struggles against the French, 1798-1802, and from 1803 Landammann.

**Altlandammann** = 'ex-landammann,' 'former chief-mag-

istrate.' In Switzerland *alt-* is thus prefixed to the designation of an office, a profession, a calling, to indicate that it is now given up, no longer held or followed; *Ulratsherr*, *Altbürgermeister*, *Altapotheker*.

1091. *das Horn von Uri*. The battle-horn of Uri, supposed to be made of a horn of the 'ure-ox,' *Aurochse*, now extinct, from which word in its old form *Ur(chse)* tradition derives the name of Uri. The specially appointed bearer and blower of this horn was called *der Stier von Uri*, cf. l. 2847.

1096. *Sigrift*, 'sacristan,' 'sexton,' Alemannic for ordinary *Rüster* or *Meßner*.

1097. The reason is given in ll. 442-5. *Baumgarten* can never forget *Tell*; cf. l. 1434.

1102. *sonnenshenen*, 'sun-shunning.'

1106. *Lafz's gut sein!* 'Never mind!'

1106-7. *Was . . . Sonnen*, an adaptation of the German proverb, one of whose forms is *Es ist nichts so fein gesponnen, Es kommt ans Licht der Sonnen*.

1107. *Sonnen* is gen. singular, cf. n. l. 1084.

The word "imposing" has been given as a characteristic epithet to this scene, the introduction of which ends here. It is imposing in its scenery, in the symbolized presence of the whole people, in the moral forces that control it, and in the decisions in which it culminates. The scenery is as it were the nocturnal counterpart of that on which the curtain first rose. Solemn grandeur, silence and repose, mysterious yet natural—how harmonious with the human action of which it is the ground! The double rainbow is no more unique in nature than is in human history the event of this night.

This *Rütli*-scene is a so-called ensemble-scene. The confederates stand for the whole people (ll. 1119-20); the character of these representatives is our warrant that the great national idea will move the masses also; nor is there any one overshadowingly prominent hero present. The unity of the meeting is the organic unity of three in one. Within each of the three groups two

characters are in some degree prominent: Stauffacher and Reding, Fürst and Rösselmann, Melchthal and Meier von Sarnen. The real leader in the business of the assembly is Stauffacher.

Melchthal's report deepens the impression produced by the presence of these more than thirty men. We learn through him that all the people of Unterwalden stand back of him and his ten companions, and what we know of this Canton we infer to be true of the others. The recital also characterizes further Melchthal himself and the Swiss people. The little scene before the arrival of the men of Uri displays the power of this popular movement, since in it the freeman and the serf, no less than contestants at law, are united.

1108. Cf. l. 3232.

**Eidgenossen**, 'confederates.' This word did not enter until rather late into the official language of the Swiss, although in a document of 1291 there is mention of *conjurati et com-provinciales*; not until 1315 do we have *eitgenoze*. The present name of the Federation is Die Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft.

1109. **Landsgemeinde**, see note on l. 665.

1111. **tagen**, 'hold a diet,' 'hold a meeting,' 'deliberate.' **Tagen** in this sense = *einen Tag halten, auf einen bestimmten Tag zusammen kommen und sich beraten*.

1113. **ungefesslich**, rather 'unconstitutional' than 'illegal.' It was not a legally constituted *Landsgemeinde*, in three respects: (1) they were only thirty-three self-appointed men, l. 1119; (2) they met by night, l. 1118; (3) the old statute-books and records were not present, l. 1121.

1118. **3ß es gleich Nacht** = *Obgleich es Nacht ist*. Same use of inversion in ll. 1119 and 1121.

1123 ff. For such a *Landsgemeinde* the *Landammann* took his seat upon a pulpit-like platform a few feet high, the 'Stuhl,' on either side of which a large battle-sword was placed upright; by his side stood the *Weibel*, 'beadles' or 'summoners,' and the clerk, before whom lay the great 'Land-buch,' in which all the action was recorded; the assembled citizens formed a great semi-circle, 'Ring,' before him.

1126. **Weibel** is the name given in Switzerland to the servants of magistrates, judges, and other officials. The term is obsolete elsewhere.

1127. **dreie**, rare old form of *brei*.

1130. **frei** = *freiwillig*.

1132. **Die** is *rel.* pron.

1134. **Römerzüge**, the processions or journeys in state of the German King and Emperor-elect to Rome in order to receive there imperial coronation from the Pope. All members of the Empire were expected to be represented, and thus also the Swiss, cf. ll. 1230-1.

**uns** is dative.

1136. Tradition makes *Schwyz* to have been first occupied by settlers, and derives therefrom the collective name of the whole country and people, *Schweiz* being but a later form of *Schwyz*; cf. ll. 1166-1202, particularly 1187 ff.

1141. **wader**, 'good,' 'worthy,' 'excellent.'

1142. **eigner**, see note on l. 1080.

1145. **des Tages Haupt**, 'chief (or president) of the diet.'

1148. The prose order would be **bei den ew'gen Sternen droben**.

The main action of the scene begins at line 1108 with the organization of the Assembly. This is not a mere external formality, but a form necessary to the nature of the meeting. As representatives of the whole people they have the right to use the lawful forms of the Assembly of any individual canton. What they are seeking is only right and justice, and these forms are our warrant that the foundations of law and justice will not be abandoned.

1152. **Geiſterſtunde**, 'hour when spirits walk,' in a loose, general sense, since we know the time to be long after midnight.

1155. It was in order for each speaker to step forward within the ring and face the presiding officer.

1156-7. Cf. n. l. 658.

**Väter**, gen. plur.; cf. l. 1248.

1158. **Ob** = *obgleich*.



1162. **in den Siedern**, the so-called East Frisian Lay, of the seventeenth century, current in the Haslithal. Schiller follows Müller's prose abstract.

1167. **hinten im Lande**, colloquial, 'far back,' 'far away.' Sweden is not named, but is unmistakably described.

1168. **Nach Mitternacht** (zu) = gegen Norden.

1172. For prose Und es zogen aus u.s.w.

1173. **Geerzug**, 'marching army (host).'

**Mittagsonne**, for usual **Mittagssonne**, 'southern sun.'

1174. **sich schlagend**, 'fighting (or forcing) their way.'

1178. **die Ruotta** (two syllables, uo practically as English oo, cf. Ruoti, n. p. 167) empties into the lake near Brunnen.

1181. **warten**, in archaic construction with gen., 'to tend,' 'take care of.'

1190. **anzuroden**, see note on l. 727.

1191. **G(e)nügen that** = genügte.

1192. **hinüber**, that is over the Lake.

1193. **Zum schwarzen Berg**, the Brünig (Braunet), between Unterwalden and Bern.

**Weißland**, so called because of its snow and glaciers, the Oberhasli valley of the Bernese Oberland, south of the Brünig.

1195. In the Canton Wallis (Valais) French is spoken, and in Tessin (Ticino) Italian.

1196. **Stanz**, the chief town of Nid dem Wald; see n. l. 493.

1198. **gedent**, poetic for eingedenk.

1199. **fremden Stämmen**, i.e. Alemanni and Burgundians; see Introd. pp. xxxv, xli-xliii.

1200. **In Mitte**, arises from in der Mitte under the influence of inmitten.

Here ends the first of the three chief divisions of the transactions of the organized Assembly. These divisions correspond to the three themes of the oath pronounced by Rösselmann, ll. 1448-1453: union, liberty, self-help with faith in God.

The representatives of the three peoples are united in a common aim; but this union has a natural founda-

tion, in that the three are one people in origin. To quicken the consciousness of this underlying unity is Stauffacher's object in his narration of the immigration of the Schwyzer.

1205. **Die andern Völter**, the people in the other cantons, of different descent.

1208. **Saffe**, 'settler,' 'tenant,' here for *Hintersaffe*, 'vassal,' 'bondman,' which comes from the older German phrase *hinter einem sitzen*, 'to be settled under a lord.' The *Hintersaffe* was not a freeman; he had to be represented by his lord and to render certain service to his lord.

**fremde Pflichten** = *Pflichten gegen Fremde*, or *von Fremden auferlegte Pflichten*.

1213-1215. **Freiwillig**, according to the view of the older historians, who understood certain phrases in the charter of Friedrich II., 1240, as if the Schwyzer constituted a community apart from and by the side of the German Empire and had voluntarily entered into union with the Empire.

1218. **wo** = *bei dem* (relative).

**schöpfen** = *finden*, 'obtain,' 'get.'

1222. **welschen**, Italian.

1224. **gelobt**, from *geloben*.

1227. **Ruechts** = *eigenen Mannes*; 'serf,' 'bondman.'

1228. **Scribann**, archaic form of *Heerbann*, 'army-summons,' the call to arms originally of all freemen able to bear arms, later of vassals to put their forces at the service of the Emperor.

1229. **seine** = *des Kaisers*, to whom *ihm* in l. 1231 also refers.

1230. **gewappnet**, for present prose *gewaffnet*.

1234. **Der höchste Blutbann**, 'the highest criminal jurisdiction,' involving capital punishment, belonged originally only to the Emperor and King in Germany, unless expressly conferred by him upon an inferior lord.

**allein**, here limits *Blutbann*; i.e. only in this one thing did the Emperor participate in their government.

1236. That he might be impartial, and that no concession might be made to imperial authority in any other regard.

1244. **Kaiser**, Heinrich V. (1106-1125 A.D.), who in 1114 at Basel rendered a decision in favor of the monastery.

1245. **Pfaffen**, not at all contemptuous as now.

1246. **Gotteshaus**, 'monastery.' The story here told is taken from Müller. Gerhard, Abbot of Einsiedeln, cf. n. l. 519, in the year 1114 at a diet in Basel accused the people of Schwyz of pasturing their cattle on the land of the monastery; for the increasing herds of the subjects of the monks in wandering out met the herds of people of Schwyz on lands which the latter had inherited from their ancestors. The Abbot appealed to a charter of the Emperor Henry II. in the year 1018, which granted to the Abbey the **herrenlose Wüste**, l. 1250; that there were settlers there, the Emperor had not known and the predecessor of Gerhard had not disclosed. Henry V. decided against the Schwyzer, but they held their ground, and they were undisturbed until 1144, when Konrad III. threatened them with the ban of the Empire, and they declared their withdrawal from the Empire, to which they returned in 1152 on invitation of Friedrich I.

1248. **beweidet** (hatten), 'had grazed over.'

1249. **herfürzog**, archaic for **hervorzog**; cf. ll. 2211 and 2230.

1258. **dem fremden Rucht** = dem österreichischen Landvogt, i.e. Gessler and his like; so also in l. 1271.

1264. There are many legends of dragons in Switzerland, cf. l. 1075 and note.

1266. That is by clearing the land and making it arable.

1269. **Steg**, 'bridge,' cf. n. l. 25. [xxxv. xli-xliii.]

1270. **tausendjährig**, as a round number. See Introd. pp.

1272. Cf. l. 1626.

1277-8. **greift . . . Himmel**, 'with confident spirit he reaches up to heaven.'

1282. **Urstand** = **Urszustand**, i.e. the original state of individual maintenance of one's rights, of self-defense, by force if necessary.

1284. **Zum letzten Mittel**, 'as the last means.'

1285. **verfangen**, 'avail.'

1286. **der Güter höchstes** = das höchste der Güter, 'our liberty.'

1294-5. First motion made by Rösselmann, not seriously, but to test the general feeling and to bring the confederates to a final declaration of their will to remain free.

1296. **wir** . . . **schwören**, an elliptical expression, with **solten** or **sollten** understood; so also ll. 1299 and 1300.

1308. **bar** = **verlustig**, 'deprived of,' 'stripped of.'

The second chief division of the transactions of the Assembly extends from l. 1205 through l. 1313. Its theme is liberty. Stauffacher aims to guide his countrymen to the determination never to accept the yoke of Austria. Their resistance must be the more quick, intense, and lasting, in proportion as their liberty shall appear to be a previously unquestioned national possession. Their right to liberty Stauffacher therefore proves from history, and that their forefathers even created this habitation out of the wilderness. The right of resistance is plain, for the governors by their lawlessness have overthrown the reign of law and order, and brought back the state of nature, wherein the individual, relying only on his own strength, has recourse to self-defense.

1317. **wohl gar** . . . **nicht**, 'probably indeed . . . not,' 'very probably not.'

1318-1320. Second motion, made by Reding; it is also rejected.

1323. **Run ist's an euch** = **Run ist die Reihe an euch**, 'Now it's your turn.'

1324. **Rheinfeld(en)**, a town in Aargau on the left bank of the Rhine, and on the road from Basel to Zürich.

**Pfalz**, here = 'residence' or 'court,' not necessarily a palace.

1326. See note on l. 911, and Introd. p. xlvii.

1329. **schwäb(i)sch**, adj. from **Schwaben** (Swabia), 'Swabian.'

1330. **Die**, demonstrative for personal 'they.'

1335. **sonst einmal wohl**, 'at some other time doubtless.'

1337. **Hansen**, obsolete accus. of **Hans**, the familiar abbreviation of **Johannes**; Duke John of Swabia, nephew of Emperor Albrecht. See p. 169.



1338. **Erker**(fenster), 'bay-window.'

1339. **Herrn**, usually **Herrn**. See l. 2961.

1343. **hinterhält** = zurückhält.

1344. **sein Rütterliches** (Erbe, or Erbteil, or Erbgut). He claimed the County of Kyburg which the Emperor Rudolf had given to his mother, while his paternal inheritance was the Dukedom of Swabia, cf. l. 2954.

1345. **habe** and **wäre**, subjunctive of indirect statement.

**habe seine Jahre voll** = sei volljährig.

1346. Cf. l. 3205.

1347. **Was . . . Bescheid**, 'What answer did he receive?'

In the third and last main division of the doings of the meeting, the theme is self-help. Stauffacher pointed out before that the way of violence is the only means to the preservation of their liberty. But any people will shrink from a violent uprising, the more it is accustomed to respect law and order. Hunn's recital convinces the confederates and us that active, even violent self-defense is necessary, because it alone is possible.

1357. Cf. Mark xii. 17: **Gebet dem Kaiser, was des Kaisers ist**, and also l. 1364.

1358. **Wer einen Herrn hat** = 'whoever is vassal (holds a fief) of a foreign lord.'

1359. **Ich trage . . . zu Lehen**, 'I hold . . . in fief.'

1360. **fahret fort**, indicative as imperative; so also in ll. 1362 and 1364.

1361. **Steuere**, 'pay tribute,' or taxes.

**Rapperswil** for present **Rapperschwyl**, town in the Canton St. Gallen on Lake Zürich.

1363. 'To the Great Lady at Zürich I am bound by oath.' The reference seems to be most direct to the powerful abbess of the **Frauenmünster** (nunnery) at Zürich, though it may be to the convent itself as bearing the name of the Virgin Mary, 'Our Lady,' French *Notre-Dame*. This was founded and endowed by Ludwig the German in 853 for his two daughters.

1367-69. Third motion, made by Fürst, and accepted.

1373. **Staatsflug**, 'in a politic way,' 'as a prudent statesman.'

In the person of the aged Walther Fürst the people of their own accord set limits to their rising. Such self-determination is most noble.

1381. **Ist bald gesprochen**, see note on *Ist bald gesagt*, l. 57.

1382. **uns**, dat. of interest = *gegen uns*.

1385. **Rosßberg und Sarnen**, see notes on ll. 77 and 1056.

1389. **find't**, see note on l. 133.

1391. **Zwing**, see note on l. 360.

1394. **Das darf uns Uri bieten!** lit., 'May Uri offer us this (insult)!' = 'Shall we suffer this from Uri!'

1395. **Bei eurem Eide**, the oath of allegiance to the constitution, which every Swiss citizen had to take not later than his sixteenth year, in order to be enfranchised. Schiller read in Ebel that every Swiss readily yielded to an appeal to this oath.

1397. **weisen**, for *verweisen*, *zurechtweisen*.

1400. **Fest des Herrn**, 'Festival of our Lord' = *Christfest*, 'Christmas.' This date is given by some of the chroniclers, while others say New Year's Day.

1401. **bring'ts die Sitte mit (sich)**, 'it is customary,' or 'custom requires.'

**Sassen**, here = *Inassen*, *Einwohner*, 'tenants' or 'dwellers,' not as in l. 1208.

1402. **Schloß**, i.e. Sarnen.

1407. **kommt** = *darf kommen*.

1408. **Zunächst**, 'close by' or 'at first,' 'to begin with.'

**der große Haufe**, 'the main body.'

1410. **Ermächtiget**, for *benächtigt (haben)*.

1414. **Dirne**, here in good sense, = *Mädchen*, *Dienerin*.

1416. **Leiter** = *Strickleiter*.

1417. **Bin ich**, condition; **zieh' ich**, conclusion.

1418. **daß (es) verschoben werde**, 'that there be postponement.'

1419. **Mehr** = *Mehrheit der Stimmen*, 'majority,' in this sense a long-used and frequent word in Switzerland, while elsewhere not so fixed and current.

In the debate on the execution of the plan the situation of Unterwalden is essentially different from that of the two other cantons, because of the two strongholds Rossberg and Sarnen, while in Uri the Keep is not yet finished, and in Schwyz there is none at all. Hence the difference of opinion and the decision to postpone the rising.

1421-2. Cf. l. 747 and note. Very likely immediately suggested by a passage in Scheuchzer: "Another and a political advantage which the Swiss have from their mountains consists in this, that by means of fire, discharging of cannon, and other similar signals, the so-called *Hochwachten*, passing from one mountain to another, this whole nation can come to arms within a day or two." Schiller uses the word *Hochwacht* in l. 1441.

1422-3. *der Landsturm . . . Landes*, 'the summons, calling the country to arms, will be given quickly in the chief town of every canton.'

1425. *sich begeben*, with the gen. = *aufgeben, verzichten auf*.

1428. *Stand* = *Widerstand, Kampf*. This mention of Gessler is important in the development of the plot.

1433. *halsgefährlich* = *lebensgefährlich*.

1435. *in die Schanze schlagen* = *aufß Spiel setzen*, 'stake,' 'risk,' lit. 'throw it into the chance.' *Schanze*, in this sense, is the French *chance* borrowed, which is itself derived from the Latin *cadentia*, 'fall' (of the dice).

1437. *Die Zeit bringt Rat*. The German proverb is, *Kommt Zeit, kommt Rat*.

The Ammann cuts off, perhaps not unreasonably, protracted discussion of Gessler's case. The confederates, under Stauffacher's guidance, have done all that the most careful deliberation and counselling can do; they cannot foresee all the possible difficulties in execution. Something must be left to presence of mind and quick decision in the moment of greatest need.

Tell is preeminent in these qualities.

*erwartet u. s. w.*, cf. ll. 190-2, 492, 1458-9.

1439. Note the word-play in *nächtlich* and *tugen*, and cf. note on l. 1111.

1441. *Gottwacht*, cf. note on ll. 1421-22.

\* *Sammlung*, 'meditation,' 'devotion.'

1448. *einzig*, not *einig*, to which it is often changed in popular quotation of this line.

\* *mit erhobenen drei Fingern*, a symbol of the Holy Trinity.

1451. *den Tod*, obj. of *wollen*, l. 1450, in parallel construction with *sein* and *leben*.

1455. *Freundschaft*, cf. l. 659 and note.

*die Genossame* = *die Genossenschaft*, 'community'; as a collective noun = *Genossen*. Uri is even now divided politically into *Genossenschaften*.

1458-9. Cf. ll. 190-2, 492, 1437.

1464-5. Since every act of private vengeance would diminish the total collective guilt to be avenged in common.

\* *mit einem prächtvollen Schwung*, 'with a stately movement.'

The scene and the act close with rhyme.

The swearing of the oath of confederation is the solemn conclusion. Moved by the grand spectacle of nature's daily awakening—a sensuous spectacle not inferior in sublimity to the moral spectacle we have just witnessed—all stand as if in prayer. A religious consecration rests upon the whole proceeding. The sun of liberty is indeed rising, after the night of resignation to tyranny. The alliance of three individual men at the end of Act I has grown into a confederation of the three cantons with definite aims.

In construction Act II is very unlike Act I, in which all four scenes were somewhat closely linked together. Here the two scenes have no formal connection, unless we find it in contrast. Scene 1 is the exposition of the Nobles-plot; Scene 2 is the climax of the Yeomen-plot; the Tell-plot is not taken up at all. The time of Scene 1 is early morning, of Scene 2 the middle of the night. Scene 1 shows us in Attinghausen the nobles of an age

now passing away, in Rudenz the nobles of the new age now opening. Rudenz is typical of the young nobles in their temptations and dangers from Austria. To these he at first yields, and the scene leaves us in fear lest the union of the nation may not include its young men of noble birth. While thus in Scene 1 the danger becomes visible which from within threatens the liberty of Switzerland, Scene 2 displays the concentration of the power of the yeomanry (at least) to protect this liberty. On the one hand an impending breach and a craving for innovation; on the other, impressive unity and the fixed resolve to preserve the old order. On both sides that bond is loosened which heretofore has joined nobles and yeomen. Can this bond—perhaps in a new form—be renewed? The final answer to this question, and to the questions of the fear which Scene 1 inspires, is given in Act IV. Scene 2.



SEAL OF SCHWYZ, 1291.

## ACT III.

ARGUMENT.—The home of Tell at Bürglen is the *first* scene. That their two young boys delight to play with the bow and to sing of hunting leads his wife Hedwig to speak of the anxious fear which she, as wife and mother, has of the hunter's life. But there is a foreboding of greater evil which she cannot refrain from urgently expressing, when Tell prepares to go to Altorf ; for in Altorf is their enemy Gessler. To no avail does Tell try to console her, as he sets out for the house of Walther Fürst in Altorf, taking with him his older boy Wilhelm and his cross-bow.

The *second* scene is a meeting, in the seclusion of the forest, of Rudenz and Bertha, as they are separated for a few moments from the chase. In mutual explanation of their sentiments, Bertha opens the eyes of Rudenz to his weak faithlessness to his country, wins him back from his fancied Austrian ambitions, and gains him for the cause of Swiss liberty.

In the *third* scene, at Altorf, the hat on the pole is before us, guarded by two soldiers, who complain that the people show it no reverence. Tell comes talking with his boy and inadvertently fails to do obeisance to the hat. He is arrested by the soldiers, and in the midst of the tumult which this new outrage causes among his friends and those of the populace who are present, Gessler enters. The opportunity for him to humiliate and crush Tell, whom he hates for his independence, is at hand. He seizes it and demands, in spite of the entreaties of the Swiss and the remonstrances of Rudenz, that Tell shoot an apple from the head of his son Walther, threatening both father and son with instant death if Tell refuse. After torturous conflict with himself in mind and heart, Tell composes himself and makes the shot successfully, to Gessler's complete surprise and consternation. But Tell had placed a second arrow in readiness, wherewith to shoot Gessler dead in case he missed the apple and harmed his son. By deceiving Tell, Gessler

leads him to confess this purpose, and then has him arrested and led off to imprisonment. By these cruel outrages and the loss of Tell, the Swiss are plunged into dull despair for the time being, while Tell alone has confident hope and trust in God.

## SCENE I.

This act and the next fall on November 19th. This scene at Bürglen begins about noon, since Tell reaches Altorf, only about a mile distant, early in the afternoon.

\* *Zimmeraxt*, 'carpenter's axe.'

\* *Gedwig*, see note p. 168.

\* *Walther und Wilhelm*, see note p. 168.

Walther's song, the *Schützenlied*, is very popular in Germany. It was set to music in 1804 by B. A. Weber.

1469. 'in the early morning light.'

1471. *der Weiß* (or *die Weiße*). In the dialects all large birds of prey have this name; here probably the 'eagle' is meant.

1474. *das Weite*, 'the wide expanse.'

1477. *Was da*, 'whatever.'

*Irreht und flieht*, archaic for *Irreht* and *flieht*.

1478. *Maß*, 'mend,' 'fix.'

1481. *was* = *wer*; neuter used for collective indefinite.

Cf. note on l. 356.

1484. *Schutz und Trutz*, see note to ll. 742-3.

1485. *leiner* (von den beiden Knaben).

1486. *zu Hause*, i.e. as herdsman rather than as hunter.

1489-90. Cf. the lines in Goethe's *Faust*, Part II :

'He only earns his freedom and existence  
Who daily conquers them anew.'

1493. *Knächte*, 'boys,' or 'men,' in the sense of servants; possibly Tell's own, as he may have considerable possessions.

1494. *Wagefahrten*, 'daring expeditions,' formed after the analogy of *Wagstück*.

1499. *Fehlsprung thun*, 'making a false leap,' 'missing your leap'; cf. *Fehltritt* and l. 649.

1500. **rüdspringen** = *zurüdspringen*, but occurs only in forms written as one word.

1501. **Winblawine**. The distinction between this sort of an avalanche, which is also called *Staublawine*, and the *Schlaglawine* (l. 1781) is made clear by the following extract from Scheuchzer: "There are in general two sorts of avalanches. The one is called *Winblawine*, in part because they are often aroused by the wind, which moves the freshly fallen snow along from high places and thus occasions its fall, and in part because of their effects, since they pass swiftly along like a wind, and by their fall produce so strong a wind that this overthrows everything even at a distance, breaks in two the largest trees, etc. The second sort has the name *Schloß- und Schlag-Lawinen*, because they overwhelm everything they meet not so much by the wind moving with them as by their own weight, and not only consist of snow, to wit, old firmly compacted snow, but envelop also trees, rocks, stones, yes, the very ground beneath, drag these along with them, all-destroying." Cf. the extract from Symonds, *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands*, Appendix, pp. 295-300.

1502. **Firn**, see note to l. 38.

1511. **Fahr**, archaic and poetic for *Gefahr*.

1513. **auf Jahr und Tag**, 'for a year and a day' = 'many a long day,' 'long enough.'

1515. **zu dem Vater**, i.e. her father, Walther Fürst.

1517. **Es spinnit sich etwas**, 'some web is being spun.'

1525. **Den Untertwaldner** = *Baumgarten*; cf. l. 151 ff.

1535. **nicht**, see note on *nicht*, l. 254.

1539. **Chni**, Alemannic diminutive of *Ahn* (compare *Wältli* from *Walther*, *Etti* from *Att* = *Vater*, *Muetti* = *Mutter*), meaning properly *Ältervater*, 'great-grandfather,' but here *Großvater*.

1544. Compare the proverb, *Thue recht und scheue niemand*.

1545. **Die recht thun, eben die**, 'Those who do right, just them,'

1548 ff. This incident of the previous meeting of Tell and Gessler was invented by the poet in order to explain Gess-





ler's hate, and also to show that Tell is not a murderer for personal vengeance.

1549. **Gründe**, 'gorges,' 'ravines.'

1550. The valley of the Schächen, Tell's native valley, extends from Altorf about twelve miles eastward.

1551. **Felsensteig** = felsiger Steig.

1558. **Herre**, older form of Herr.

**mein ansichtig ward**, 'caught sight of me.'

1560. **gebüßt** (hatte), see note on l. 565.

1561. **Gewehr**, in its original meaning of weapon, in general, here applied to the crossbow.

1562. **verblaßt**', used in the eighteenth century without distinction from *erblaffen* whose present sense it has in this place. *Verblaffen* tends now to be restricted to a permanent loss of color and so to be used of things only.

1563. **versagten ihm** (den Dienst), 'failed him.'

1565. **sein**, gen. of er.

1567. **keinen armen** = nicht einmal den geringsten, 'not the slightest,' 'not a miserable (or sorry or pitiful).'

1574. **dort weg** = von dort weg.

1575. **Was fällt dir ein?** 'What are you thinking of?'

1577. Just because she can give no ground for her anxiety, she regards it as a sure presentiment of coming danger.

1581. **Wältli**, abbreviation of *Walthser*.

1582. **auch** = aber auch.

This scene makes us acquainted with Tell's home and individual life, while in relation to the third scene of this act it explains Tell's presence in Altorf with his son and his crossbow, and makes clear the origin and intensity of Gessler's hate of Tell. It has two main parts, the first ending with l. 1514.

The first part opens as an idyllic picture of family life. The song and the playing with the bow show on what the boys' minds are bent. This turn of their minds is the father's delight, the mother's sorrow. For here too Tell is above all the free-spirited, self-reliant man, dexterously able to do for himself. He intends that his

children shall also learn to do everything possible, since the more a man individually can do, the more independent is he. Hedwig's character is in strong yet beautiful contrast with Tell's and also with Gertrud Stauffacher's. Hedwig, a loving mother and anxiously tender wife, whose home is rightly her world, typifies the great multitude of Swiss women whose most sacred interests, whose peace and happiness in the life of the home are bound up with the freedom of the land. Gertrud, of broad mind and knowledge, and childless, is the exceptional woman, who leads and who is able to rejoice in the prospect of sacrificing herself for her country. In contrast with Tell, Hedwig desires a calm evenly flowing life, he a life that is every day a new battle to be fought and won; she knows only the dangers of the hunter's life, he the means of safety, vigorous use of his powers, confidence in God and himself.

The second part of the scene clouds with foreboding the sunshine of its opening. Hedwig mistrusts the purpose of Tell's going, his preparations, his destination, his taking Walther along. Her fear of a collision with Gessler Tell tries to dispel by means of two reasons which only confirm her in it. With feminine intuition she forebodes evil, and in the touching picture with which the scene ends, our hearts are with her while in thought we follow Tell to Altorf.

Throughout this scene also Tell uses many proverb-like sententious expressions, yet his description of his meeting Gessler is fluent and detailed. Thus are characterized his habits of thought and speech.

### ACT III. SCENE 2.

\* *Staubbäche*, 'brooks dashing in spray.' *Staubbäche* are waterfalls whose water in its long downward plunge is divided by the resistance of the air into fine spray ('dust'). Most famous is the one in the valley of Lauterbrunnen near Interlaken.

\* *Bertha*, see note p. 168.

\* **Andenz**, see note p. 166.

1600. **enß umwerben**, 'pay court to you,' 'sue for your hand'; the word implies a number of assiduous suitors.

1603. **trenlos**, usually construed with dative and no preposition.

**wird**. A verb agreeing with a relative is put in the third person even when the antecedent of the relative is a pronoun of the first or second person (or a vocative), unless that pronoun be repeated after the relative.

1611. **naturbergeff(e)nen** (one of those infrequent expressions in which the past participle has active force) = *ber die natürlichen Pflichten vergessen hat*, 'unnatural,' 'degenerate.'

1612. **seinem**, i.e. Gessler's.

1626. Cf. l. 1272.

1629. **das Beste** and **den Frieden**, l. 1631, are direct objects of **Will**. Cf. note on *den Tod*, l. 1451.

1632. **Schloß**, here 'stronghold.'

1638. **Thät' . . . besser** = *Wenn ich es thäte, so wäre es besser für mich*.

1646. **angestammte**, 'inborn,' 'that is your heritage.'

1649-50. **alles . . . werden** = *cure Liebe läßt* ('makes,' 'enables') *mich alles sein und werden*.

1650-51. **Seid** (*das*) **wozu**.

1657. **der Verwandten**, primarily Gessler, whom Schiller makes a relative, both being called *von Brunn*.

1659-60. The Bruneck family were native in Aargau, but her estates are placed in the Forest Cantons, and from the parallel she draws between her fate and that of Switzerland it would appear that her estates are immediate fiefs of the Empire.

1661. **Blid**, 'vista,' 'prospect.'

1664. **dem großen** (*Habsburger*) **Erbe**.

1665. **Ländergier**, 'greed for territory.'

1671. = *Die Ketten einer verhaßten Ehe hatten mein* (genitive of *ich*) *dort*.

1664-72. As soon as intenser emotion appears we find rhyme, and this scene being largely lyrical, rhyme is most frequent in it.

1675. **Sehnen in das Weite**, 'longing for the wide world.'
1685. **des Lebens Weiten**, 'the distant realms of life.'
1688. The meaning is, **zum Himmel allein**.
1689. **gelichtet**, really = mit Licht versehen; render it by 'clear,' or 'bright,' or 'made bright.'
1690. Note the change from *ih*r to *du*.
- ahnend**, 'prophetic.'
1694. 'Here where the flower of happy boyhood opened.'
1695. **Freude Spuren**, 'joyous memories.'
1696. They live for him because as a child he dwelt with them and they entered into his life.
1699. **fehlte**, preterite subjunctive. In effect, 'Without it no earthly happiness would be complete.'
1700. **sel'ge Insel**. Allusion to the legendary Isles of the Blessed, where perfect happiness prevails. They were often alluded to by the ancient Greek and Latin writers, and usually located in the Atlantic Ocean west of the Pillars of Hercules. Such classical allusions occur only three times in this drama; here and in lines 3116-7 and 3209. They are not out of place from the lips of nobles.
1719. **dem stolzen Ritter**, it may be Gessler.
1720. **Landbedrücker** = Bedrücker des Landes.
1726. **Was auch D(a)raus werde**, 'whatever may come of it.'

A scene of romantic love in a romantic locality. Of Bertha we had a glimpse in Act I. Sc. 3, while the scene (Act II. Sc. 1) between Attinghausen and Rudenz gave us some insight into the aspirations and sentiments of Rudenz. The present scene answers, in part at least, the questions which that one left with us. As Gertrud inspired Stauffacher to action, so here Bertha, the young noblewoman, clears the mental vision of Rudenz, the young nobleman—inspires and leads him. Among the nobility we may expect to find no fewer Berthas than Gertruds among the yeomanry. All classes, all ages, both sexes are entering into the movement whose cause and aim Bertha forcefully states in the last two lines of the scene.

This meeting both Bertha and Rudenz have long desired, with the same purpose of a final declaration, and it is to be decisive for both. The main portion of the scene from l. 1602 through l. 1701 has two parts, in the first of which Bertha discloses her real self to Rudenz, while in the second Rudenz begins to recover his real self. For him what Bertha says about herself is a surprising revelation; for Bertha, the real nature of Rudenz to which he now returns is what she has always had faith in and loved.

Rudenz is indeed as yet no hero. Doubtless the poet's execution of this character-portrait falls much short of his intention. Ambition and love seem to sway Rudenz too easily, and duty and true honor to be but faint within him. Nevertheless let us remember that he is a growing, developing character, let us find our ideal conception of him in Bertha's knowledge of him, as expressed in lines 1643-1648, 1650-1651, 1690-1691, and 1725-1727, and let us look forward with confident hope of his bearing in the future.

### ACT III. SCENE 3.

The time of this scene is shortly after that of the first scene of this act, of which it is a continuation. The place is said to be a meadow or common *near* Altorf, while in line 394 it is said to be *mitten* in Altorf, with which location the statements of lines 1740 and 1742-3 more easily agree.

\* **Bannberg.** This high hill lies on the eastern side of the village Altorf. In line 900, *bannen* is used of the prohibition of hunting; this *Bannberg* is so named because it is forbidden to cut any wood on it, lest an avalanche be started.

\* **Frießhardt**, see note p. 168.

\* **Leuthold**, see note p. 168.

1735. **Anger**, see note on *Matten*, p. 171.

1738. **Verdrieß**, archaic form of *Verdruß*, frequently used by Luther.

1739. **Was rechte Leute sind, die,** 'all who are respectable people, they.' Their action seems to be in execution of the agreement of l. 413.

1741. **beugten,** preterite subjunctive.

1743. **um die Mittagsstunde.** The time is then early in the afternoon.

1746 ff. The priest carrying the Host (das Hochwürdige or das Venerabile—the consecrated wafer) was coming from a dying person to whom he had administered the sacraments of death, the Lord's Supper and extreme unction. The ringing of the bell is the sign that the Host is approaching, and in Catholic lands the pious kneel to its passing.

1751. **die Monstranz,** 'the monstrance.' This is the transparent pyx or case, usually surrounded by rich ornamentation in cross-shape, in which the priest holds up to view the Host before the congregation in church. It is never carried to the sick, the closed case then used being called the ciborium, a cup provided with a cover. Devout Roman Catholics regard the action of Rösselmann as highly unbecoming.

1752. **denchten,** also *dänchten*.

1758. **trann,** interjection, 'in truth.'

\* **Gildegard, Mechthild und Elisabeth,** see note p. 168.

1763. **wer da,** cf. *was da*, l. 1477.

1765. **habt Respekt,** said mockingly.

1766. **und ließ' nus** (nichts als) **seinen Gut.**

1767. 'The country would not be any the worse for that.'

1768. **Volk der Weiber = Weibervolk.**

1770. **Rut** here in the sense of *Verlangen, Begierde.*

**sticht,** 'pricks,' 'spurs,' 'prompts.'

The conversation of the two soldiers is the first part of the threefold introduction to this scene. As exposition, it explains the grave danger impending from the hat, and shows the attitude of the people toward it, for vagabonds and women mock, while decent men avoid it. In Shakespeare's manner we have in the talk of the two mercenaries and the women some bright

touches of humor, to set off the tragic gloom to follow.

1771-2. That trees thus bleed is a very ancient widespread popular belief. Cf. Vergil, *Æneid*, iii. 22-34. It has often been used in literature, as by Ovid, Dante, Ariosto, Tasso, Spenser.

1773. *führte*, preterite subjunctive.

1775. *gebannt*. We may render this here and in line 1777 by 'under a ban,' but the meaning in the first case is 'charmed,' 'enchanted,' 'bewitched,' and in the second case 'sacred,' 'forbidden,' cf. note on *Dammberg*, \* 84.

1778. *die Firnen*, see note on l. 38.

*Hörner*, here snow-clad sharp peaks, although more usually applied to bare peaks of rock rising above snow and ice.

1781. *Schlaglawinen*, 'avalanches,' or 'mass-avalanches,' see note on l. 1501 and App. p. 296.

1785. *Landwehr*, here in the older sense of *Wehr*, *Damm*, *Schutz für das Land*, 'bulwark.'

1787 ff. The description is put, no doubt intentionally, in such general terms that one may think of Germany, of Upper Italy (i.e. Lombardy), or possibly of France. On the whole it is easiest to refer it to Germany, since one following the streams from Tell's home would be led by the *Schächen* to the *Reuss*, then to the *Aar*, and then to the *Rhine*. Those who refer it to Italy suppose Tell's thoughts to go on in the same direction from the snow-mountains south of *Altorf*, of which he has just spoken; they also find difficulty in applying to Germany ll. 1794, 1798, and 1810.

1790-1794. Rhyme, as it were involuntarily.

1792. *nach allen Himmelsräumen*, 'towards all quarters of the heavens,' 'in all directions.'

1802. *Bischof* and *König*, both with collective meaning = ecclesiastical and secular lords.

1804. *Gefieder*, usually 'plumage'; here *Bird und Gefieder* = 'bird and beast.'

1806. *das Salz*; the sale of salt was a royal monopoly.

1811. *es wird mir eng* (narrow) *im weiten* (broad) *Land*; this

oxymoron like 'eloquent silence,' 'open secret,' can hardly be duplicated in English. The meaning is, 'I begin to feel oppressed in that broad land'; one might perhaps say, 'I begin to feel that broad land narrow about me.'

1812. *Da*, 'then,' 'if that is so.'

*unter*, 'among,' or possibly 'below the (threatening) avalanches.'

1813-1814. Cf. ll. 157-8.

The second well-defined introductory incident is the talk of father and son, in which the course of Tell's thoughts is chiefly guided by the questions of the curious boy, that carry the father far away from what is immediately about him. We may note, however, in passing, that as, in Scene 1, Tell desired his sons to have all bodily skill and independence, so here he will not let Walther rest in dull superstition, and he teaches love of liberty and native land.

Tell's action and words in this part of the scene have been judged in most opposite ways, diverging in the interpretation of line 1816. One view is that Tell knows about the hat and the edict, and intends not to notice it or do obeisance; another view holds that Tell does not yet know anything about either hat or edict. The second of these two interpretations we must reject, because it is difficult, if not impossible, to conceive of Tell's being present in Act I. Sc. 3 without seeing the hat and hearing the proclamation; furthermore, Tell himself in lines 1870-1 explains his action by *heedlessness* rather than ignorance. Again, these words of Tell, together with what we already know of his peaceable disposition, render impossible also the view first mentioned above. We must rather understand that Tell knows about the hat and the edict, but having just passed it without noticing it, because absorbed in talk with Walther, and being now in his thoughts far away, he does not at the moment remember anything about the hat and the edict, and absent-mindedly answers line 1816. This is only the easier to comprehend if we recall how large an ele-



ment there is in Tell of reflection, visionariness; thus Gessler says, line 1904, „Man sagt mir, daß du ein Träumer seist.“

\* *greift in*, 'seizes upon.'

\* *In die Scene rufend*, 'calling behind the scenes.'

1825. The second *Was* = *Warum*.

\* *Fürsten*, see note on *Hansen*, l. 1337.

1833. *erkennen* = *anerkennen*.

1834. *Das hätt' der Tell gethan*, 'Do you mean to say that Tell has done that?' In this not infrequent idiom a past subjunctive is used interrogatively to question or dispute something supposed to have been asserted.

*Bube*, here = 'knave,' 'scoundrel.'

1839. *unfers Amtes*, cf. note on l. 368.

1840. *schreiende*, 'flagrant,' 'outrageous'; the common form is *Himmelschreiende* as in line 367; see note.

1843. See l. 661 and note.

1846. *schon*, not of time, but for emphasis, = 'never fear, I'll,' etc., or 'I'll help myself all right.'

The introductory portion of the scene culminates in this third part,—the arrest. It is full of dramatic life. What happens is for Tell and his friends like a thunder-bolt from the clear sky. His conscience acquits him of the charge made by Friesshardt, and his consciousness of innocence keeps him from using or allowing violent resistance.

1852. *berstest* is not subjunctive, but indicative; *bersten* is now commonly of the weak conjugation in the present tense.

\* *Gessler*, see note p. 165.

\* *den Falken*, absolute accusative, cf. note on *Meer*, l. 31.

\* *Rudolf der Harnas*, see note p. 169.

\* *Bertha und Rudenz*, cf. the preceding scene. The hunt is now ended and they have rejoined the hunting-party.

1858. *was* = *warum*.

\* *Er giebt den Falken einem Diener*; i.e. on assuming the character of judge.

1859. *gestrenger Herr*, lit. 'Stern Sir,' or 'Dread Sir,' but to be rendered by 'Your Worship'; in this use *gestreng* was

originally a title given to nobles or officials of a prince having penal jurisdiction.

1859. Friesshardt here uses *bu* to Gessler. This *bu* of emotion is more freely employed in this drama than elsewhere by Schiller, and transitions back and forth between *thŕ* and *bu* are very frequent.

**Waffentuecht**, 'man-at-arms.'

1860. **wohlbestellter** (or **wohlbestallter**), 'duly appointed.'

1861. **über** (for usual **auf**) **frischer That**, 'in the very act.'

1862. **Ehrengruß**, 'salute of honor.'

1865. **deinen Kaiser**. In fact the hat is not the symbol of *imperial* authority.

Tell is recognized by Gessler at once.

1869. **Trachten**, infin. as noun, lit. 'desiring,' 'longing,' 'aspiring' = 'disposition.'

1870. **Aus Unbedacht**, 'from thoughtlessness,' 'without intention.'

1871. **eurer**, see note on l. 286.

1872. See Introd. p. lxii.

1873. **nicht mehr begegnen**, for prose **nicht wieder geschehen**.

1875. **nehmt**, subjunctive of indirect statement.

**es mit jemandem anfechten**, 'to cope with,' 'to compete with,' 'to be a match for.' In this phrase **es** stands for the old collective **das Waffentuecht**, 'arms,' 'weapons,' the phrase originating from the custom of laying the weapons on the ground in case of a duel, in order to test their similarity and thereafter taking them up to fight; for **es** are also substituted **Kampf**, **Streit**, **Wette**, **Handschuß**, the last supported also by the use of the glove in challenging.

1877. **dir**, ethical dative, pleonastic; 'Father will shoot you an apple,' etc.

**Schritte**, plural (as also in l. 1915), but in l. 1883 the more usual invariable form **Schritt**. Masculine and neuter nouns used as units of measurement generally are invariable after numerals.

1892. **nein doch** = emphatic **nein**.

1893. **In Sinn**, usually in **den Sinn**.



1899. A very important line in regard to the plot and to Tell's character.

1908. *wohl bedächte sich*, 'would doubtless deliberate (or hesitate).'

*drückt die Augen zu*, figuratively = *willst die Gefahr nicht sehen*.

1909. *greift es . . . an*, 'attack it,' 'go at it.'

The main action of this scene begins with the arrival of Gessler, and its first division, the dialogue between Gessler and Tell, ends here.

Already known by reputation and feared by us, announced by horns, the cries of women, and Fürst's anxious words, coming proudly on horseback from one cruel sport to another yet more cruel, there now appears the only one of the Austrian governors whom we actually behold, the very incarnation of all the oppression that threatens the land,—Gessler. Our suspense is heightened by the critical nature of the moment, and the presence of the strong retinue of men-at-arms. In talk with Tell Gessler first accuses him and then introduces the assignment of a feat by which he means publicly to humiliate Tell. What feat he may have had in mind before Walther's words decided him we cannot say. When Tell in his horror is unable to believe that the governor is in earnest, Gessler repeats his command, and finally closes every way of escape by means of the awful dilemma: "Either you will try the shot or both you and your boy shall die!" to which with cruellest delight he adds his taunts.

1912. *Aurzweils*, here gen. sing. masc. or neut. 'jesting'; it is usually feminine.

1913. *Hier ist der Apfel*. It is by poetic license that apples are still on the trees after the middle of November. Cf. note on *Rechen und Sensen*, p. 206.

1917. *ihrer*, partitive genitive depending on *hundert*.

1920. *Es gilt*. This impersonal exclamation, as used here in cases of danger and conflict, is not precisely paralleled in English; compare Engl. slang 'for all you are worth'; we may say, 'Life is at stake,' 'Now's the time,' 'It boots.'

1921. **Haltet an euch**, 'restrain yourself.'

1924. **Leib und Leben**, 'life and limb.'

1925. **verwirrt** (hätte).

1928. **kennen lernen** = *kennen gelernt*. The modal auxiliaries and a few other verbs—*lassen*, *heißen*, *helfen*, *hören*, *sehen*, and sometimes *lehren* and *lernen*—when construed with another verb in the infinitive, form their compound past tenses by adding the infinitive instead of the participle to the auxiliary; this apparent infinitive form is, however, historically itself a participle.

1930. **die Gasse öffnen**, here = *Platz machen in Gassenform*, form a double line with open space between, 'make a passage.'

1931. **verwirrt**. But has Tell directly violated the mandate?

1933. **kunstgeübte**, 'practiced,' 'trained,' 'skillful.'

1937. **gilt es**, 'it's worth your while.'

1939. **das Schwarze**, 'the bull's eye.'

1942. **Dem (da)s Herz**, etc. 'Whose emotion does not make his hand tremble nor cloud his eye.'

1948. **hinsehen**, Swiss for *hintreten*, *sich hinstellen*. Cf. l. 2838, *vor seinen Richter stehn*.

1950. The ambiguity of this line may be excused on the ground of its being spoken by a boy. It can strictly mean only, 'He will not miss in shooting at the heart of his child,' i.e. he will surely hit the heart. But the intended meaning must be, 'He will not miss and hit the heart,' etc.; even so there is difficulty in having *Herz* rather than *Haupt*, unless we take *Herz* as very general in the sense of center of life.

1954-62. Walther's bearing and words resemble those of Prince Arthur in Shakespeare's *King John*, Act IV. Sc. 1.

1967. Cf. ll. 1447 ff.

1970. **mit frischer That**, 'with swift action,' 'without delay,' cf. ll. 1400 ff.

1972. **vergebens**, 'in vain,' 'to no purpose,' 'for nothing'; i.e. if one carries weapons, he must expect to use them. The word cannot mean 'with impunity.'

1975. Cf. l. 785.

1978. *Frent's end*, conditional.

In this second division of the main action of this scene Tell is completely silent, overcome by emotion. Bertha, true to her noble soul, is the first to speak in behalf of reason and mercy; thereafter Fürst, Harras indirectly, Rösselmann, Walther Tell, and Melchthal either intercede for Tell or speak defiance to Gessler. But the tyrant heeds none of them; for him no one is present but Tell. His purpose is to goad Tell on towards the shooting; not that he intends that Tell shall shoot, he only desires Tell to feel as most acute torture the conflict of his father-love with the temptation to shoot. Gessler eagerly hopes he may in this way break Tell's pride as an archer and his spirit as a man. The reason why Gessler does this is his experience in that earlier meeting (described by Tell in the first scene of this act) in which he felt the tyrant's fear of the mortal missile. Tell's omission to do reverence to the hat is only a pretext to Gessler, who has long since formed the purpose of humiliating and crushing Tell and now thinks he has an ideal opportunity. The feat he demands of Tell is fitted with cruellest nicety to Tell's character. From it Tell cannot escape by surrender of his own life alone.

1983. *Mir schwimmt es vor den Augen*, 'my head swims.'

1988. Mocking allusion to the rescue of Baumgarten.

1989. *Wenn . . . gilt*, 'when it's a question of saving.'

1990. *jeht . . . selbst*, biblical, cf. Matt. xxvii. 40, 42; Luke xxiii. 25; Mark xv. 29.

*Du retteſt alle*. Again a mocking allusion to the past; you save every one, you are always saving people.

\* *Der* (better *das*) *Goller* (also *Roller*) is a leather doublet or jacket.

1991. *Es muß* (geschehen).

1992 ff. Cf. ll. 1723-31.

1996. Cf. the proverb *Wer den Bogen überspannt, der zersprengt ihn*.

1998. *Ich darf's*, 'I have the right to.'

2006. *überſtwehend*. Not infrequently in poetry when

two adjectives are connected by *und* the declensional ending is omitted with the first one.

2013. *end*, Gessler or the Austrians in general.

2019. *baran*, 'on the point of,' 'about to.'

The events of the third division of the main body of this scene show that Gessler was mistaken in his confident calculation that Tell would be unable to make the shot. Tell's first attempt to aim fails, then Gessler's mocking refusal to accept his life in exchange for the shot brings Tell into most intense conflict of soul. Suddenly he places in his doublet the arrow with which, if need be, he will take Gessler's life, and as his boy calls to him encouragement, he becomes conscious of the dreadful necessity (cf. l. 136) of saving his boy's life, collects and composes himself, and aims. Parallel with Tell's aiming and getting full command of himself there now runs Rudenz' defiance of Gessler. Love has cleared Rudenz' vision and inspired him, but it is the cruelty of the unspeakable soul-torture which Gessler inflicts upon Tell that calls out the first nobly heroic act on the part of Rudenz. Reckless of himself, with hand on sword, he denounces and defies Gessler. As he is about to draw his sword, Stauffacher's cry rings out: "The apple has fallen"!

Can we explain Tell's shooting by reasonable psychological motives? The question has been only too often answered in the negative. Why did Schiller take the affirmative?

The one comprehensive motive which might lead Tell to refuse to shoot is the father's love of his son. That Tell's affection is deep and strong is sufficiently emphasized not only in this scene but both earlier and later, so much so that some regard his shooting as on this account alone unintelligible, psychologically impossible.

In examining the motives for the act, we feel at once a difficulty in that Tell's words shed little light on his thoughts and feelings, while Gessler is goading him on.

A later line—2328—does give us some clue to the fact that Tell's pride as an archer, his inmost spirit as a man, is provoked, and his heart bids him do what his boy—his true *alter ego*—urges in lines 1963-5. Tell feels himself goaded by Gessler to a deed, not of vain-glory, but of righteous self-assertion; Gessler calls in question not only his skill as a marksman, but all those elements in his character on which his skill chiefly depends and which are a large part of that which makes life for him worth living. Tell has heretofore known and felt himself to be the man who, wherever it is necessary, can boldly try any venture and be sure of his skill always and everywhere, because he is master of all his powers. If he shoot at the apple resting on his child's head, he will assert before the governor and himself his control of his nerves, his head, his heart. What motive could be stronger than this? Doubtless a father's true love! And Tell will do grievous wrong to himself no less than to his boy if, in conflict with his love, he yield to this pride. But here this conflict does not exist. Because of the certainty that Gessler will execute his threat—"You will shoot or die *with* your boy!"—Tell has only to choose between delivering his boy and himself into the merciless hands of Gessler and taking his son's and his own fate into his own skillful hands. He makes the shot, therefore, with utter certainty.

Some critics will not restrict Tell's choice to the dilemma just stated. They urge a third possibility, that Tell might purposely have missed in shooting and thus have forfeited his own life, and a fourth, that he might at once have shot Gessler dead. But as to the first of these suggestions, it must be said that Tell's character does not admit of purposed missing, that Gessler would not have accepted such a shot, and that it would not have brought any safety to the boy Walther. Secondly, if Tell had shot Gessler, both his boy and himself, together with many or all of his

friends there present, would have been killed immediately by Gessler's men-at-arms, who surround the entire company.

2035. *Wasst' ich's ja*, inverted order for emphasis, 'Why, I knew.'

2046-7. *ich . . . gelöst*, 'you have manfully freed yourself,' 'you have quit yourself like a man.'

The main action of the scene ends in its brief fourth division with the expression of the effects of the successful shot on those present. Amazement is common to them all, excepting Walther. Gessler's first exclamation makes it clear that he did not expect Tell to shoot. Tell's friends have also sympathy and joy. The judgment of the value of the shot is given by a soldier, by Rudolph der Harras, by Gessler himself, and by Rösselmann, who utters also a righteous imprecation on its instigator.

2049-50. *Du settest . . . zu dir*, 'you placed in your doublet'; see stage-direction after l. 1990.

2052. *bräuchlich*, archaic and poetic for *gebräuchlich*.

2053. *lass' . . . gelten*, lit. 'I do not allow to pass,' 'I do not accept.'

2054. The future indicative is sometimes used to state a claimed present probability, and the future perfect—as here—to state a claimed past probability.

2055. *frisch und fröhlich*, 'at once and cheerfully.'

2060. *durchschoss ich*; the preterite indicative used for emphasis in place of the pluperfect subjunctive.

2062. *eurer*, gen. with *fehlen*; cf. note on l. 286.

2071. Stauffacher regards the success of the shot as a judgment of God in Tell's favor.

2076. The charters prohibited foreign imprisonment. By that of 1291 the Forest Cantons were secured against foreign judges, and hence against execution of sentence in a foreign place. Küssnacht was in the Canton Schwyz.

2077. Cf. ll. 1324-1335.

\* *Bertha, Rudenz . . . folgen*. The explanation of this action, which otherwise is improbable, especially on the part



of Rudenz, is given by the stage-direction inserted at this point in the Hamburg MS. : „Indem er [Gessler] abgeht, ergreift er die Hand der Bertha und führt sie mit sich. Rudenz will ihr folgen, die Weiber werfen sich in den Weg. Weiber : „O rettet ihn, Herr Freiherr! Rettet ihn!“ Rudenz reißt sich los und folgt der Bertha.“ Bertha is thus compelled to go with Gessler, and Rudenz follows in order to protect her.

2086. Cf. and contrast l. 3096.

2088. *warum müßtet ihr*, 'why had you to,' 'why could you not keep from.'

The main action of the scene led through great fear and sorrow to highest joy. Its conclusion brings a revulsion from this joy to intense fear and sorrow. Tell is now a prisoner in the hands of his mortal enemy, who is prompted to this new outrage by the fearful foreboding of the truth of lines 2575-6. We look forward to see the free son of the mountains in a dungeon. Gessler seems to be finally triumphant. Very striking is the utter dejection of Stauffacher and the Swiss. Tell's heart is full of faith in God, whom Gessler with impious defiance has challenged. With Tell's faith we therefore still hope.

In spite of its many characters and incidents this scene is unitary, since everything has reference to Tell's fate.

Between the three scenes of Act III there is external connection in that Tell passes from the first, and Bertha and Rudenz from the second to the third. But they are also inwardly connected. The first really serves as exposition to the third, while the second, although more complete in itself, contains also the explanation of Rudenz' bearing in the third, for what he there resolved is here done.

Scene 1 has been called an idyll of the family, and 2 an idyll of the heart, while the tragic 3d scene has been regarded as standing in direct contrast with 1 and 2. But Tell's narrative of his meeting with Gessler,

and Hedwig's forebodings cast tragic shadows on the idyllic brightness of 1, while 2 closes with the prospect of tragic conflict.

Of the three plots, the Tell-plot has in 1 the second stage of its ascending action, and in 3 rises irresistibly to its climax and the immediately following tragic crisis. The Nobles-plot has its initial impulse in 2, and its ascending action in 3. The Yeomen-plot—without any active movement—has the first stage of its descending action in 3, in which scene all three plots are united in one place and concentrated.



SEAL OF UNTERWALDEN, 1291.

## ACT IV.

**ARGUMENT.**—In the *first* scene we see from the eastern shore of the lake a violent storm. Kunz von Gersau tells to the fisherman Ruodi and the boy Jenni what has happened at Altorf, and that the Baron von Attinghausen is dying. He leaves, and the others see and describe to us how Gessler's boat is driven about on the lake. Soon Tell appears and narrates to them that Gessler had been forced by fear to free him and to put him in command of the boat, and that by a hazardous leap ashore he had saved himself and left the boat adrift. Tell asks the fisherman to carry a message to his wife, and then the boy leads him the shortest way to Küssnacht, Gessler's destination.

The *second* is the scene of Attinghausen's death in his castle. Hedwig comes, to find her son Walther and her father. She reproaches her absent husband and his present friends for what has occurred. Attinghausen laments that Rudenz has not come to receive his dying blessing. Stauffacher and Fürst make his last hour radiantly joyous by telling of Rudenz' change of heart and of the confederation of the yeomanry of the three cantons. The Baron blesses Walther, prophesies the future freedom and glory of Switzerland, and dies while admonishing the Swiss ever to remain united. Rudenz appears, and grieves that he has come too late. He convinces Stauffacher, Fürst, and Melchthal that the nobles must make common cause with them in defense of the land and its liberty. He and Melchthal decide upon immediate action.

The *third* scene is the narrow defile through which Gessler must now pass. Tell appears, and as we through his monologue see his very mind and heart, we realize that he now will and must kill Gessler. Tell converses with Stülssi as a wedding procession passes. Gessler enters in conversation with Rudolf der Harras and separated from his retinue by the wedding party. A poor woman, Armgard, petitions Gessler for mercy toward her husband, an inno-

cent victim of official cruelty. While Gessler, thus angered, is in the midst of vehement declaration that he will break the spirit of the Swiss and crush their liberties, Tell's arrow pierces his heart. Gessler recognizes and Tell confesses that Tell is the author of the shot. The people declare their joy in their beginning deliverance from the Austrian yoke. The friars, who remove Gessler's body, sing a solemn hymn, with which the act ends.

## SCENE I.

The time is the afternoon of the same day as in the preceding act; the third scene is late in the same afternoon. The place is on the eastern shore of the southern arm of the lake, not far from the village Sissigen or Sisikon between Flüelen and Brunnen.

\* *Ann von Gerban*, see note p. 168.

\* *Fischer* = Ruodi of Act I. Sc. I.

\* *Fischartnabe* = Jenni of Act I. Sc. I. There is really no doubt about this identification, although the point has been much discussed. The boy is named in l. 2301; Ruodi is ferryman as well as fisherman, and as such must have shelter on both sides; in l. 115 he speaks of his home as being not where he then is; according to l. 2289 this fisherman was present at the Rütli, as was Ruodi, see stage-direction after l. 1097. At the close of Sc. I of Act I his hut on the western shore was destroyed and he has now moved across the lake (at least temporarily).

2102. 'If liberty is ever at stake.'

2104. *D(a)ran*, see note on l. 2019.

2113. *Des freien Mannes*, condensed for *des Mannes*, wenn er jetzt frei wäre.

2115. *am Tode liegen* for more usual *auf den Tod liegen* or *im Sterben liegen*.

2120. *Dorf* = Sissigen or Sisikon; see note above.

2124. *Der Mund der Wahrheit* = Attinghausen.

2125. *Das schnde Auge* = Attinghausen. To refer this expression, as some do, to Heinrich von der Halden, Melchthal's father, or to Rudenz, seems quite inadmissible;



neither has done anything important and widely known in opposition to tyranny, nor are they alluded to elsewhere in this connection. Those who do refer these words to Rudenz find support for their view in the expressions ll. 2005 and 839.

2126. **Der Arm** = Tell.

2128. **kommlich**, Swiss for bequem, angenehm.

**hansen** = sich aufhalten, 'to stay.'

2129 ff. These lines echo the famous outburst in Shakespeare's *King Lear*, Act III. Sc. 2, 'Blow, winds, and crack your cheeks! rage! blow!' etc.

2135. **Wäfte**, here = Wilbnis; gen. dependent on Wölfe. Such separation is poetical. This and the preceding line allude to the legend as given in ll. 1260 ff.

2140. **geboten**, past part. of gebieten.

2144. **Eisestürme** = Türme von Eis.

2147-8. **Wenn die alten Klüfte einflürzen**. not clear, but probably = 'if the old gorges close up,' i.e. by the falling in together of their sides.

2152. **daß (es) gebetet werde**, 'that prayer may be offered,' i.e. by all who hear the bell.

2158. **Busen**, = 'bay' or 'cove.'

2159. **Handlos**, 'handless,' 'inaccessible.'

2161. This line has six feet.

2163 ff. In his fear of the elements and lack of self-reliance Ruodi is as he was in Act I. Sc. 1.

2164. **Wasserflust**, 'gorge of water,' 'gorge above the water.'

**sich erst verfangen (hat)**, 'has once become caught.'

2170. **Herrenschiff**, say 'governor's boat.' The word is formed like Herrenburg, Herrenbank.

2171. **am roten Dach**, render either 'by its red awning (or roof or top)' or 'by its red deck.' The boat may have had a sort of deck-house or shelter of which the roof was painted with the Austrian color, cf. l. 781, or its deck proper may have been painted red.

2177. **geben nicht auf**, usually transitive, **geben nichts auf**, 'do not heed (or regard, or obey).'

2180. **Greif nicht in . . .** 'do not stay.'

2185. **mitsamt**, pleonastic and hence emphatic, = *zusammen mit*.

2187 ff. **Buggisgrat** and **Sadmesser** are steep cliffs of the **Arenberg** on the eastern shore of the lake between Flüelen and Brunnen; **Teufelsmünster** is a perpendicular rock on the western shore. Note the meanings of the compounds **Sadmesser** and **Teufelsmünster**.

2191. **gebroschen**, poetic for *geschheitert* (*sink*).

2193. **Fluh** (*Flüh, Flue*) = *steile Felsenwand*, a Swiss word.

2194. **gähstößig**, a Swiss word = 'precipitously'; *gäh* = *jäh*, and *stößig* is an adj. from *Stoß*, 'vertical declivity.'

In the short time intervening between Acts III and IV Gessler has embarked, after previously arranging the abduction of Bertha; also the news of Tell's arrest and Attinghausen's dying has spread.

It is a master-stroke of dramatic art that in this introductory portion of the scene we are witnesses through the eyes of Ruodi and Jenni of the fearful passage of the boat on which Gessler is conducting Tell away, and that Tell appears in the very moment when we think he must be lost. Ruodi's impassioned eloquence is hardly his own. It is rather as if the very mind and heart of the common people were, under poetic inspiration, expressing, with most intense lyric fervor, sorrow and despair, joy in the sympathizing wrath of nature, and appeal to the judgment of God in nature.

2199. In joyous gratitude for having solid ground beneath him after being rescued from danger by water.

2208. Cf. l. 2268.

2211. **Fürscheidung**, archaic for *Vorscheidung*.

2214. **fahen**, archaic and poetic for *fangen*.

2219. **aufgegeben**, 'lost,' 'abandoned,' 'a man given up.'

2222. **Wassertüfte**, 'waste of waters.'

2226. **der Gransen** (also *Grans*), a South-German word = *Schiffsschnabel*; here **hintern Gransen** = 'stern.'

2228. The *kleine Axen* is south of the *große Axen*, both being parts of the Axenberg.

2230. *gählings* = *jähling*s.

*herfürbrach*, archaic for *hervorbrach*. Cf. note on l. 109.

2233. *der Diener einer* = *einer von den Dienern*.

2237-8. *wissen sich . . . nicht Rat*, 'are at their wits' end,' 'know not what to do.'

2239. *nicht wohl berichtet* = *unfundig*, 'not well informed,' 'not skilled.'

2241. The construction of the genitive *sein* (of *er*) with *brauchen* is poetical.

2242-3. *wenn du dir's getrautest* = *wenn du dir (e)s zutrauest*, 'if you were confident.'

2246. *hiedannen*, archaic for *von dannen*, *von hier weg*.

2248. *redlich*, here in the archaic sense of 'stoutly,' 'steadily,' not at all with the common meaning of 'honestly.'

2249. *Schießzeug*, 'shooting implements,' 'bow and quiver.'

2256. *angehen*, here = 'go up,' 'ascend.'

*abreihen*, unusual = *erreichen*.

2257. *handlich zugehen*. In South-German usage *handlich* = *rüstig*, *tapfer*, 'stoutly,' 'vigorously'; *zugehen* here has the sense of 'to go at,' 'to lay on.' Schiller used *zugehen* here because in Tschudi's expression „*handlich zuginb*“ he mistook the latter word to be a form, *zuginen*, of the verb *zugen*, while it really = *zögen* from *ziehen*, 'to pull.'

2258. *Felsenplatte*, 'rocky ledge,' 'flat rock.'

2262. *angestemmt*, render by pres. part. 'pressing,' 'bearing on.'

2266. *Fußstoß*, 'thrust of my foot.'

2268. Cf. l. 2208.

2278. *über Schwyz*, across (by way of) Schwyz, to Sewen, Steinen, Arth, and Immensee, and then to Küssnacht.

2282. *Arth*, a large village at the southern end of Lake Zug, at the foot of the Rossberg.

2283. *Steinen*, Stauffacher's home; cf. Act. I. Sc. 2.

2285. **Lowerz** is on the western shore of Lake Lowerz, to the east of which Steinen lies.

2290. **So**, 'then.'

**thut . . . an**, 'do me the kindness.'

2292. Cf. l. 554.

2294. **Schwäher**, usually = **Schwager**, 'brother-in-law,' but here in its original sense of **Schwiegervater**, 'father-in-law'; obsolescent, but still occurring in South Germany.

2300. **zur Rede kommen**, for usual **zur Sprache kommen**, 'to be talked about.'

2302. **was auch**, 'whatever.'

**unternommen** (**hat** or **haben mag**).

Again an effective rhymed conclusion of a scene.

It is with tremendous dramatic effect that Tell suddenly comes before us, and our hoping against hope is turned to joy in fulfillment. With no little fluency and aptness of speech, and with great dramatic vigor and clearness, does Tell narrate his deliverance. He recites, indeed, a miniature drama, playing between himself on one side, and on the other Gessler and his men. Tell is a second time at the helm of a boat threatened with destruction; again he displays his skill and self-reliance, and again does God, whom Gessler but just now has defied, deliver Tell.

Some have attempted to criticise Tell's escape as being on his part a grave moral wrong. They claim that he commits a breach of confidence toward Gessler, because he first promises to help the governor and his men, and then breaks this promise. To brush away this criticism as utterly baseless, we need only call to mind the real facts of the situation, that Gessler by his words and acts has established a state of war between himself and Tell, that Tell makes no promise, and that Gessler, in foolish blindness to his own selfish interests, really forces upon Tell the duty of escaping. Even if one insist upon the fact of a promise on Tell's part, the subsequent safety of all who were on the boat is its fulfillment.



The conclusion of the scene, in particular lines 2282, 2298, and 2300, makes us anticipate that Gessler's cruelty has caused a fateful change and determination in Tell's soul, as to whose precise nature the scene leaves us in dramatic suspense.

ACT IV. SCENE 2.

The place is the same as in Act II. Scene 1. The time is nearly the same as that of the preceding scene.

2303. *hinüber*(gegangen), 'passed over,' a euphemism for *gestorben*.

2304-5. On the lips of one dying or believed to be dead a downy feather is placed, in order that the breath may move it if life be present.

2313-4. *mir*, ethical dative, hardly to be translated.

2319. *es galt das Leben*, 'life was at stake,' 'it was a question of life and death.'

2325-27. As a phantom of her excited imagination she cannot help seeing the boy bound; she does not know that he stood free and called upon his father to shoot, and that Gessler threatened both with death, if Tell did not shoot.

2331. *setzen* = *einsetzen*, *auf's Spiel* . . . *setzen*, 'stake,' 'risk.'

\* *mit einem großen Blick*, 'with wondering, reproachful gaze.'

2345. *erbrauste*, 'rose roaring.'

*Thränen*, cf. l. 1038.

2355. *erkrankte*, preterite subjunctive.

2357. *Alpenrose*. This so-called 'Alpine rose' is not really a rose but a rhododendron, growing on the mountains between the levels of four and of six thousand feet above the sea.

2360. *in dem Balsamstrom der Lüfte*, 'in balmy streams of air.'

2367. Cf. l. 324.

2369. *rettete*, preterite subjunctive.

This scene has three very distinct parts, of which the first ends with the awakening of the Baron. In the first Hedwig is the leading character; in the second,

Attinghausen; in the third, Rudenz and Melchthal. With these leading characters in each case the leaders of the Rütli-confederates are connected. But the construction of the scene is loose, and as a whole it hardly possesses organic unity. It is, for example, not plain why the Rütli-leaders and Walther Tell are present here and now, nor how Hedwig knows that her boy is here. We must overlook these relatively unimportant imperfections, for the sake of the beautiful symbolism of the presence of representatives of all three plots at Attinghausen's death, for the sake of the inspiring grandeur of the prophecy of the second part, and for the sake of the noble action of Rudenz and Melchthal in the third part.

The introduction of the scene belongs chiefly to the Tell-plot, but the Yeomen-plot is represented in the leaders who defend Tell and themselves against the charges of the misinformed, home loving Hedwig, while the Nobles-plot furnishes both place and occasion. Charmingly characteristic of Hedwig are her feelings, their changeful play, and culmination in irrepressible pride in Tell. Her last words are almost as if she had some intuition of Tell's escape.

2373. *den Junfer*, = Rudenz; cf. note on l. 765.

2375. *Er hat sein Herz gefunden*, i.e. true love of country has revived in his heart; a biblical phrase, cf. II. Sam. vii.

27. Cf. ll. 2006-7 and 2481.

2377. *Mit Geldentföhigkeit*, see ll. 1992-2031.

2382. Sense of pain is a proof of the presence of life, and absence of pain often a sign that death is near.

2397. *sich*, reciprocal = einander.

2409. Biblical phrase, Daniel v. 26.

2414. *wenn es gilt*, 'when the struggle is on.'

2416. *berwogen* is past participle of *verwegen* (*verwägen*), obsolete in this sense of 'to venture,' 'to be bold.'

2417. *eiguem Mittel*, the plural is more usual.

2419. *unserer* = *unser*; see note on *turer*, l. 286.

2421. *Es lebt noch uns* may be rendered 'there will be life

after us,' or *Es* may be regarded as expletive and *das Herrliche* as the subject of both *lebt* and *will*, or again *Es* may be taken as = *das Herrliche*.

**andre Kräfte**, i.e. the burghers of free cities and the free yeomanry.

2422. **Das Herrliche der Menschheit**, 'the glory of mankind,' i.e. freedom.

2423-26 and 2430-46. In the tone of the seer, prophetically.

**Aus diesem Haupte u.s.w.** Unless we find in these lines reference to Walther Tell as representing the younger generation of the yeomanry in the fairer union of whom with the nobility and the burghers the "glory of mankind" is to be conserved and perpetuated, we must have recourse to the general view that the meaning is rather merely that the incident of Tell's shot is, as it were, the seed of liberty.

2430-1. After the Crusades many nobles took up residence in the cities.

2432. **Üchtland**, formerly a name of the district between the Jura Mountains and the Bernese Alps, comprising the Canton Freiburg and part of the Canton Bern; *Ücht* meant 'morning twilight.'

**Thurgau** was then larger than the present Canton of this name; it embraced all the northeastern part of Switzerland, east of Aargau.

2433. **Die**, feminine because *Stadt* is understood. Bern and Freiburg were in Üchtland.

**herrschend**. Bern has ever been of commanding importance in Swiss affairs.

2435-6. **Zürich** was in Thurgau; it has always been commercially active, and the guilds were early instituted and influential, although not constitutionally recognized until the year 1336.

2436. **Zum**, 'as a,' 'to form a.'

2437. Probably of the victorious defense of the city of Zürich against Duke Albrecht and Emperor Charles IV. in 1345 and against the former in 1351 and 1352; but *ihren* may be taken to refer to all these cities.

2438 ff. The notable battles, here alluded to, of the wars in defense against the Austrians and the Burgundians were those of Morgarten (a pass on the border between Schwyz and Zug) in 1315, Laupen in 1339, Sempach in 1386, Näfels (a pass in Glarus) in 1388, St. Jacob in 1444, Granson and Murten in 1476.

2443-6. Allusion to the traditional heroic act of Arnold von Winkelried, an Unterwaldner, in the battle of Sempach.

2444. *Ein feltes Opfer*, cf. l. 3074.

2448. *Ort*, see *Introd.* p. liii and note on *Bierwalbflättersee*, p. 171.

\* *Burgglocke*, 'castle-bell.'

The main portion of this scene consists of the 2d and 3d distinct parts and contains the climax of the Nobles-plot. In the 2d part, ending here, the dying nobleman, Attinghausen, blesses the confederation of the yeomanry and becomes its prophet, while in the following 3d part his nephew and heir, the young nobleman Rudenz, allying himself by solemn vow with the leaders of the confederation, commences the active fulfilment of Attinghausen's prophecy.

When we took leave of Attinghausen in Act II. Sc. 1 his soul was filled with pain at Rudenz' defection, and with sorrow because of the passing of the old and the coming of a new order of things. His death-hour takes from him this pain and sorrow. He hears of Rudenz' return to the holy cause [of country, and his sorrow changes into joy as he looks forward to a brilliant future for his country. With prophetic vision he foretells the historic glory of Switzerland in the maintenance of liberty, and recognizes the new freedom—of the confederation of an independent yeomanry, an independent burgher-class, and an independent nobility—as the better freedom. The dying admonition to unity is our most solemn assurance that the cause of the nobles is one with the cause of the whole people.

2453. A freeman like Walther Fürst might hold fiefs in addition to property of his own.

2454. In so far only as it has another owner. It is now das Schloß von Rudenz (instead of Werner) auf Aittinghausen.

2464. An inference from ll. 2377-8.

2477. Vater = Walther Fürst.

2478. Die enrige, addressed to Stauffacher.

2482. The line has six feet. (für) nichts geachtet, 'regarded as nought,' 'despised.'

2483. wessen . . . versehen, 'what are we to expect from you?'

2484. denken; with genitive instead of the usual an with the accusative.

2487. Handschlag, 'hand-clasp,' as sealing a pledge.

2488. Ein Manneswort, 'an honest man's word.'

2489. Stand, 'class,' 'rank.'

2492. sich is dative.

2498. Cf. ll. 2868-9.

2507. Pfand, 'pledge,' 'trust.'

2511. Cf. l. 149.

2515. wartet ab, imperative.

2525. Bertha must have resided in a castle in the land; she says herself that her estates are in Switzerland. Her intercession in the Gessler-scene revealed to the governor her real sentiments.

2528. vermögen, see note on l. 2416.

2532. der Bütende, as dem Tyrannen, l. 2524, is Gessler.

2533. 'What outrage and violence they will boldly use.'  
sie = Gessler, his companions and his creatures.

2534. zum verhassten Band, see ll. 1667 ff., esp. 1671.

2538. Cf. l. 3231.

2546. Before Ob is an ellipsis of um zu versuchen or um zu sehen.

2548. sparen for aufsparen in the sense of aufstieben.

2551. Time as it moves on brings with it a change of circumstances, which requires a change of rules, laws and enactments.

2555. Botensegel, 'messenger's sail' = 'messenger-boat.'

2558. **Wetters Strahl**, for usual **Wetterstrahl**; **Wetter** here = **Gewitter**.

\* Rudenz grieves that he has not come in time to receive his uncle's dying blessing. But assured of Attinghausen's forgiveness, he soon turns to the new duties devolving upon him. A most solemn vow does he take that with all his soul he has given himself to his country and his Swiss fellow-countrymen, and that he will live in the spirit with which Attinghausen died. Fürst and Stauffacher have confidence in Rudenz and accept his vow, but Melchthal at first mistrusts him. In this way Rudenz and Melchthal, the nobleman and the yeoman, are distinctly marked as the leading characters in the remainder of this scene. Melchthal alone represents the proud self-consciousness which Attinghausen saw in the bold action of the Rütli-meeting; in his words ring a high sense of manhood and power and a strong class-feeling. The yeomanry will defend itself and stand independent and free by the side of the nobility. This and his mistrust of the nobles are expressed in lines 2482-3, 2488-9, and 2491-3. In answer—lines 2493-5—the nobleman, with full acceptance of the new order and in the spirit of Attinghausen's prophecy, admits the full equality of the yeoman-class. Then after a pause in which he realizes that this is not enough, he proves that he merits full confidence, in that he has treated his knowledge of the Rütli-meeting as a sacred secret. To this negative proof Rudenz now adds conclusive positive proof by urging immediate execution of the Rütli-plans and by declaring that, since he is not bound by the decision there reached as to the time of the rising and its joint character, he will act at once.

At this point it is to be noted that after his exclama-

\* The view here taken is that of Bocksch in the 'Zeitschrift für den deutschen Unterricht,' Bd. X. S. 185 ff.—It is certainly much more just to Schiller's intention and to unitary conception of the drama than the commonly received view, which gives such romantic, extravagant importance to Rudenz' love for Bertha.

tion in line 2515 Melchthal says nothing until he pronounces the momentous lines 2547-52. His exclamation shows that he is the first and the only one to realize the full import of Rudenz' words and position: the knights, the nobles, in voluntary alliance with us yeomen for action against the tyrants and their oppression. And when now Rudenz further discloses that he and his betrothed are victims of just such a personal outrage as so many yeomen have suffered, and that he must fight in his own self-interest, then the last vestige of Melchthal's mistrust disappears, and in lines 2547-52 he leads for the yeomanry in accepting the alliance of the nobility and in committing himself to immediate joint action with Rudenz.

The full content of Melchthal's thought is this: With the powerful help of the nobles there can now (l. 2548) be successfully accomplished the rising which we yeomen, when alone at the Rütli, decided could not be undertaken until later. Since our meeting there, the enormous double outrage on Tell has been perpetrated, and now the nobles are with us in active alliance. Time has changed these essential conditions and thus imposed upon us the law of immediate execution of the Rütli-plans.

Thus in the persons of Rudenz and Melchthal is realized that participation of the nobles in the confederacy which is later formally declared in l. 2890 and sealed as described in lines 2898-2901.

#### ACT IV. SCENE 3.

\* **Die hohle Gasse**, 'the hollow way,' 'the deep defile,' about three quarters of an hour long, led from Imisee or Immensee, a small place on Lake Zug, past Gessler's castle to the village of Küssnacht, see Map. Tell has come as quickly as possible from where he was at the end of Scene 1, and from Arth at the southern end of Lake Zug has reached this pass. The time is late in the afternoon of the same day. The road is now entirely changed, the defile having been

filled up. The traditional place is marked by a memorial chapel to Tell.

2563. **Holun' der Strauch**, 'elder-bush.'

2567. **Uhr**. The figure is taken from an hour-glass or sand-clock.

2572. **gärend Drachengift**, lit. 'fermenting dragon's-poison,' say 'rankling venom.'

2573. **Die Milch der frommen Denkart**, lit. 'The milk of good (pious) disposition,' is equivalent to Lady Macbeth's 'the milk of human kindness.'

2579. **Da**, anticipating *Damals* of l. 2584.

**Bogenstrang**, 'bow-string.'

2583. **ohnmächtig**, here not 'swooningly,' but 'impotently,' 'unavailingly.'

2590. **meines Kaisers Vogt**, 'governor representing my Emperor.'

2592. **Was du** (dir erlaubt hast).

2594-5. **mit . . . erfreuen**, 'with delight in murder to do in insolence and with impunity every abominable outrage.'

2597. **Bringer bitterer Schmerzen**, addressed to the arrow, an Homeric expression, *Iliad*, iv. 117 and xv. 451.

2603. **in der Freude Spielen**, 'in joyous sports,' cf. l. 2648.

\* 2606. **herben**, an Homeric epithet.

2608. It is difficult to assume that Tell has but one arrow, and the meaning of the line probably is, *Ich werde keine Gelegenheit haben einen zweiten Pfeil zu versenden*.

2609. **auf dieser Bank**, the dative of rest instead of the accusative with *sich setzen* in the sense of *Platz nehmen, ausruhen*.

2611-2. **jeder . . . vorüber**, 'Each hurries past the other swiftly and as a stranger.'

2614-5. **leicht geschürzte**, 'lightly girt,' not burdened with the wares and the cares of the merchant.

2616. **Spielmann**, 'minstrel,' 'musician.'

2617. **Säumer** = Führer der Saumrose, 'driver,' 'carrier.'

2619. **Den u. s. w.**, in explanation of *ferne herkommt* in the preceding line. For every road makes connection somehow with the remotest parts of the world.





2624. In translation insert 'but that' before **er bracht**'; see note l. 1043.

2626. **Ammonsborn**, 'ammonite,' lit. 'Ammon's horn,' a fossil shell related to the nautilus, resembling somewhat a ram's horn in shape. Ammon was an appellation of Jupiter as represented with the horns of a ram.

2628. **Weidwert**, here 'game' = **Wild** in l. 2635.

2635-6. **Läßt sich's . . . verdrrießen**, inversion for emphasis, not conditional: 'Why, the hunter does not let it discourage (daunt) him.'

2638. **Wagelprung**, 'daring leap'; cf. note l. 2874.

2640. Based on a passage in Scheuchzer, to the effect that in extreme need the chamois-hunter cuts the skin of the balls of his feet in order that the thickening adhesive blood may serve to prevent his slipping on smooth sloping rocks or narrow standing-places. This is now generally regarded as purely a matter of legend.

2641. **Grattier**, 'chamois,' or 'crag-deer,' living on the highest rocky ridges and peaks of the mountains, lighter reddish brown and smaller than the ordinary chamois, or **Walbtier**.

2648. **Frendenschießen**, usually a salute fired to celebrate some joyous event, but here = **Schützenfest**, 'shooting-match.'

2649. **das Beste**, 'the first prize.'

\* **Eine Hochzeit**, 'a wedding party.'

\* **gelehnt** = English present participle.

\* **Flurschütz**, 'ranger.'

This scene divides naturally into two main parts, of which each in turn has two subdivisions; after Tell's monologue and the conversations in which Stüssi appears, Gessler's appearance marks the beginning of the second part, which is cut across sharply by Tell's shot.

The poet's skill in arousing, sustaining, and heightening dramatic suspense is inimitable. Tell's very first words make us know what is to happen, so that our thought is ever intent upon this one thing. Gessler

has not yet appeared, but he has been before our mind's eye every instant.

The monologue permits us to look Tell's soul through and through before his fateful act. Such insight is the more necessary as we do not yet have anything like real knowledge of the revolution which took place in Tell's inner being during the apple-shooting. It is a reflective monologue, altogether natural for a man of Tell's character, who is at no loss for words in which to clothe his thoughts when he desires to express them, and who is given to thoughtful meditation. He is to be sure not a Hamlet with resolution sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought; he will not long weigh pros and cons, and hesitate when choice is urgent, but he is disposed to reflect on the causes and the righteousness of such a decision as this. As regards the form of the monologue it is to be noted that it three times approaches dialogue, as Tell in thought addresses Gessler, then his arrow and bow-string, and lastly his children.

As if right to Gessler's face, Tell explains his ability, his necessity, his right to kill the tyrant. Because Gessler's cruelty has changed his heart and filled it with rankling venom, Tell has both the power and the will to do the deed that ordinarily is murder. But what he can do and wills to do is also what he must do. The necessity is multiple: he must protect his children, his wife, himself; he must perform the vow he made, with his next shot to reach the governor's heart, and he must thus avenge upon Gessler the sanctity of nature that Gessler outraged in demanding that he shoot at his own son. The right to kill Gessler rests for Tell upon these same reasons, together with the fact that Gessler has violated the laws of man and of God; Tell is but the executor of God's righteous judgment.

Now Tell prepares for the final moment, addressing his arrow and bow-string, until the passing of travelers

diverts him. His words mentioning murder in lines 2621, 2629, and 2630 are not to be understood as expressing any shrinking from the deed; they are simple reflections on a settled, rightful fact.

The tones with which the monologue closes, lines 2635-2650, vibrate, as it were, with the archer's supreme joy. Consciousness of his right, and hatred of Gessler, overcome the shrinking of the natural man from bloodshed, and the marksman's delight in a master-shot leaps forth.

The effectiveness of the contrast made by the wedding-procession and its music needs no comment. The wedding-party also explains the later separation of Gessler from his retinue and secures the presence upon the scene of the common people.

2651. *Klostermet(e)r*, 'monastery-steward,' i.e. the manager (see note to l. 1072) of the farm which the Monastery of Engelberg owned near the village of Mörlischachen on the Lake not far from Küssnacht. *Schächen* is an Alemannic word for a tongue of land projecting into water.

2652. *Brantlauf*, 'wedding-procession,' or 'wedding'; an obsolete word for *Fröheit*, because the custom of competing for a future wife in a race died out long ago.

2653. *Scute*, a herd of cows, not less than twenty in number.

2654. *Zmifsee* (or *Zimmensee*), a hamlet on Lake Zug, a quarter of an hour's distance from the „höhle Gasse.“

2659. *Rehmt mit, was kommt*, 'take along whatever comes,' = English slang, 'take in (enjoy) whatever comes along.'

2660. *leicht ergreifen*, 'quickly grasp,' 'hasten to lay hold of.'

2661. 'Here there's marrying and elsewhere burying.'

2664. *Ruff*, a Swiss word = *Bergsturz*, 'landslide.'

2665. *gegangen* = *Loßgegangen*.

*Glarner*, adj., 'of Glarus,' the Canton.

2666. *Glärnisch*, name of a group of mountain-peaks in the Canton of Glarus, several of which are over 9000 feet high.

2669. **Da sprach ich einen**, 'I just spoke with a man.'  
**Baden**, see note on l. 409.  
 \* **Armgard**, see note p. 168.
2676. **Mau deutet's auf**, 'They interpret it with reference to.'
2682. Note contrast with l. 428.
2690. **Der Strom**, the Muotta.
2691. **an ihn**, unusual for **bei ihm**, as if there stood here **Habt ihr ein Ansuchen an ihn?**, or **Habt ihr ein Gesuch an ihn zu richten?**  
 Still Gessler is not present in person, but we think of him every moment during these conversations, by which the dramatic suspense has been not only maintained, but even quickened. The underlying meaning of Tell's answers, of which Stüssi is unconscious, keeps our mind on the governor, while all the others mention him, either denying or affirming his coming. Again do we have the characteristic proverb-like substance and form of Tell's utterances.
2702. **Mein Lebtag**, 'all my days,' for either **meinen Lebtag** or **meine Lebtag**.
2706. 'It would have sunk to the bottom with every living thing on board'; see note to l. 331.
2707. **Dem Volk**, 'This sort of people.'  
**Dem**, with emphasis, is demonstrative pronoun.  
**kann . . . bei** (kommen), 'can . . . get at' (i.e. affect, hurt).
2710. **drauf denken**, see note on l. 613.
2712. **ihm** (= **dem Volk**) **sanft zu thun**, 'to be agreeable to it.'
2715. **bring' ich's an**, 'I will present it' (i.e. my request, petition).
2726. **Die**, demonstrative pronoun.
2727. **im Werl und Werden**, 'on foot and in progress'; the alliteration can hardly be duplicated in English.
2728. The Habsburgers aspired especially to increase their power as a dynasty and in territory.  
**der Vater** is Rudolph I., Emperor from 1273 to 1291.
2729. **der Sohn** is Albrecht I., Emperor from 1298 to 1308.
2731. **So oder so**, 'this way or that way,' i.e. whether it will or not.

2735. **Waisen**, 'fatherless children'; sometimes indeed the English word 'orphan' is applied to a child bereft of only one parent.

2736. **Gestrenger**, see note on l. 1859.

2738. **Wildheuer**, 'gatherer of wild hay,' explained by the next lines.

**Rigi**, the famous Rigi, group of mountains between the lakes of Lucerne, Zug, and Lowerz.

2749. **den Mann**, 'my husband.'

2750. **in den sechsten Mond** (poetic for *Monat*), lit. 'into the sixth month,' 'more than five months.'

2755. **So**, 'as.'

2760. **Recht gesprochen**, 'done justice.'

2763. **nach . . . fragen**, 'care for.'

2772. **was** = *etwas*.

2774. **Mau . . . hinnen**, 'Let her be hurried away.'

2780. **wie es (sein) soll**.

\* **fährt mit der Hand**, 'puts his hand.'

2791. **Ein Mann des Todes!**; see l. 73 and note.

\* **gegleitet**, weak participle. This verb is usually of the strong conjugation, but in modern usage there is a tendency to make it weak.

2794. Cf. l. 79.

\* **die Musik geht fort**, 'the music continues.'

2810. **gebrochen**, see note on *brechend*, l. 865.

2814. **leget Hand an**, 'set about it.'

2817. **Wagt es, Herr (auf eure Gefahr)!**; a warning.

2830. **Treu**, dative case governed by *vertrauen*.

\* **barmherzige Brüder**. The introduction of the friars of this particular order is an anachronism, as the order of the 'Brothers of Mercy' was not founded until the year 1540 in Seville by San Juan di Dio.

2832. **die Raben**, with the rude wit of common people, an allusion to the black garb of the friars.

2835. **Es** (as also in next line), an indefinite and impersonal subject; best rendered in English by the passive.

2838. **sehen**, see note on l. 1948.

When Gessler is seen, Tell is invisibly present. In

Act III. Scene 3, Gessler revealed himself but in slight degree as an antagonist of the people. Now his conversation with Rudolf der Harras fully discloses his political plans, his ends, and his means, and also the ultimate reason of his action. The scene with Armgard is very powerful and highly dramatic in construction. It not only brings before us again Gessler's cruel outrages upon individuals and his violation of justice, but it also culminates in his vow to break the liberty-loving spirit of the Swiss people, and the arrow smites him in this precise instant of his intensest antagonism, individual and collective.

Gessler recognizes the missile as Tell's, and Tell acknowledges his deed. The three lines 2792-4 have been mistakenly criticised as untrue and merely theatrical. They are, however, not aimless boasting over a dead man, but the expression of justifiable joy in the re-established safety of the land, addressed to the still living tyrant. Nor are these words intended by the poet to deepen the impression that avenging Providence is here controlling. They have rather this other very important purpose. The motives which in the beginning of this scene impel Tell to kill Gessler all lie in his individual relation to the governor; the thought of delivering and saving the country is not there evident. Lines 2793-4, however, make it plain that this motive has since become decisive. So in line 3143 Tell seems to say the same thing. In the same sense must be understood the later praise of Tell as the rescuer and savior of his country. After the monologue, in which his personal motives are fully reviewed, Tell is witness of the scene between Gessler and Rudolf der Harras, and above all of the scene with Armgard. And now he realizes that not only his cottage but all the homes of the land, not only his innocent children but innocence, not only himself but the whole land are involved. The Gessler at whom he sends his arrow is not only his personal enemy, but the enemy of his country.



In the conclusion of the scene the cold, unpitiful horror of the people is significant. The immediate effect of Gessler's death is shown in Stüssi's bearing and words; Tell's deed gives higher courage to the common man, who by the side of the dead tyrant declares his final rejection of the yoke of tyranny. The hymn of the friars, like a Greek chorus, expressing a general reflection based on this concrete case, brings calm and comfort to the agitated minds and hearts of all.

Act IV brings in Scene 1, for the Tell-plot, the first stage of the descending action, in Tell's escape from the boat; in Scene 2, for the Yeomen-plot the second stage of the descending action, and for the Nobles-plot the climax, while the Tell-plot is passively represented; and in Scene 3, for the Tell-plot the second stage of the descending action.



SEAL OF LUCERNE, 1314.

## ACT V.

**ARGUMENT.**—The *first* scene shows us the destruction of Keep Uri. Gessler's death has been the signal for a general rising to expel the Austrian governors, and signal-fires on the mountains announce its universal success. Melchthal narrates the capture of Sarnen by Rudenz, and his own seizure of Rossberg and rescue there of Bertha. While all are rejoicing, Rösselmann brings the news of the death of Emperor Albrecht at the hands of his nephew, Duke Johann of Swabia, and the latter's friends. This news and the report that the next emperor will not be elected from the Habsburg family complete the joy of the Swiss, since they are thereby freed from all fear of Austrian vengeance. A messenger from the Empress arrives with the request that the Swiss assist her in punishing the murderers, but they are unanimous in feeling that they have no duty or desire so to do. Stauffacher summons all to go to Tell's home and extol him as their savior.

The *second* scene is the interior of Tell's house, where Hedwig and the two boys rejoice in the near coming of Tell. A man in the garb of a monk approaches. From his wild looks Hedwig is shrinking with foreboding of evil, when Tell arrives. On learning that it is Tell, the monk reveals himself to him as Duke Johann of Swabia. At first Tell gives way to his horror, but soon takes pity on the guilty youth, advises him to go to Rome and seek absolution from the Pope, and describes to him the way thither.

As he departs, the *third* scene shows us the valley and heights about Tell's house, with Tell's countrymen come from all quarters to hail him their savior and defender. Rudenz and Bertha come too. Bertha asks to be admitted into the confederation, and gives her hand in promise of marriage to Rudenz, who closes the act and the drama by liberating all his serfs.



## SCENE I.

The place is the same as in Act I. Scene 3. The time is two or three days later than that of Act IV, i.e. the 21st or 22d of November. The Sarner stronghold was taken during the night preceding the dawn with which this scene opens, while in l. 2875 Melchthal says that Rossberg was taken the night before. At least one day, therefore, must elapse between Acts IV and V.

\* **Signalfeuer** and, l. 2839, **Feuerfignale**, compare ll. 1422-2, 2554, and 2557.

2841. **Die Burgen**, Rossberg and Sarnen.

2845. **Joß**, see l. 370 and note.

2847. **Stier von Uri**, see note to l. 1091.

2848. **Hochwacht**; this word, which we have already had in ll. 1441 and 2449 in the sense of beacon-fire, designates also the guard placed on a height, or, as here, the height itself, 'mountain' or 'watch-tower' or 'signal-height.'

2862. **Gesellen**, 'workmen' or 'men.'

2862-3. Cf. l. 387.

2864. **Es ist im Lauf**, 'It is under full headway.'

2866. **gebrosen**, 'destroyed.'

2868. **die Lande** (see note to l. 431) and, l. 2871, **der Schweizer Land** both mean here only the three ancient Cantons, the **Walstätte**.

**rein u. s. w.**, cf. l. 2498.

2874. **mannlich**, archaic for **männlich**.

**That**, poetic newly coined word, 'deed of daring'; for similar compounds see ll. 1494 and 2638.

2875. **nachts zuvor**, i.e. the night from the 19th to the 20th of November.

2877. **angezündet** [hatten, und als].

2879. **Bub**, see note to l. 466.

2880. **die Brunnerin**, i.e. Bertha of Bruneck, 'my lady of Bruneck.'

2882. **auf u. s. w.**, cf. l. 468.

2887. **Da galt**, see notes to ll. 1920 and 1989.

**Geschwindigkeit**, 'quickness.'

2888. **Edelmann**, here = *Lehensherr*, as in l. 2453.

2894. **selbender**, here 'together'; lit. 'I and one other.'

2901. **Schicksalsproben**, 'tests (or trials) of fate.'

2902. **Über den Brünig**, see note to l. 1193. This mountain lies south of Sarnen; historically Landenberg fled northward towards Lucerne.

2905. **Nach . . . ihm**, poetic emphatic inversion for *ich jagte ihm nach*.

2910. **Urfehde**, 'solemn oath.' This word means in full 'an oath not to seek vengeance for wrong suffered.'

2918. **Unter**, only in a very general sense, for in Act III. Scene 3 Walther stood not close by the pole, but under the linden-tree.

2922. The hat or cap is in so far a symbol of liberty as the right to cover one's head has always been regarded as a sign of liberty.

The first scene of this final act shows us that the morning of a festival of deliverance is dawning in Switzerland. What line 387 prophesied for the common people is now fulfilled, and we behold the average man doing his part in the spirit of Stüssi's words in lines 2818-20. The destruction of the scaffolding and of the building has the significance of an effective declaration of liberty. The signals from Schwyz and the bells from Unterwalden proclaim the end of tyranny there, while here in Uri we see the yoke destroyed. The alliance of Rudenz and Melchthal, as was emphasized in the notes to Act IV. Sc. 2, has the deepest and widest symbolical importance; it is the reunion, on an independent footing of equality, of the yeomanry and the nobility. That the Swiss people in this union of all classes in these three Cantons has thus successfully realized its declaration of liberty, and, while rejoicing, shows noble moderation and self-restraint, gives us all the assurance that can be derived from the character of this people as to its continued freedom and happiness in the future. But the real antagonist of their rights and liberties, though distant, may still continue to

threaten. What of the Emperor? Must he still and always be feared?

2946. **Brud**, or Brugg, is a small town on the river Aar in the Canton of Aargau.

2948. This line is the poet's homage to the noted historian Johannes von Müller, who was born at Schaffhausen in 1752, and died at Kassel in 1809. See *Introd.* p. lix.

2952. See lines 1336-1348 and notes thereto.

2953. **Vatermord** = **Verwandtenmord**, 'parricide'; Albrecht was his uncle and guardian.

2954. **das väterliche Erbe** was the Duchy of Swabia; see l. 1344 and note.

2957. 'To compromise with him by giving him (To put him off with) a bishopric.'

Often the younger sons of great families have been made to have an ecclesiastical career, because high ecclesiastical station has implied a rich and influential position, while it was not necessary to take from the fortune of the eldest son anything for the benefit of the younger.

2958. **Wie dem auch sei**, 'Be that as it may.'

2965. **Der Stein zu Baden**, cf. l. 2669 and note l. 409.

2966. **Gen** (= **Gegen**) **Rheinfeld**, see note to l. 1324.

**Hoffart**, 'court'; compare **Lager** (for **Hoflager**) in l. 817 and **Pfalz** in l. 1324, and notes thereto.

2967. **Hans** = Johann von Schwaben, l. 2952.

**Leopold**, Albrecht's second son, defeated at Morgarten in 1315.

2974. **alte große Stadt**, the Roman Vindonissa (now the village Windisch), an important frontier fortress against the Germans; it was destroyed by Childebert II. in the year 594.

2975. **Heiden**, 'pagans,' 'heathen,' i.e. the Romans.

2976. The Habsburg, originally Habichtsburg, was built about 1020 by Count Radbod of Altenburg on the wooded height of the Wülpeberg, which descends steeply towards the Aar. Count Werner II. in 1075 was the first to use the name Habsburg. The castle is now a ruin, twenty minutes' distance above Schinznach.

2982. 'Murdered by his own kinsmen (or adherents) on his own territory.'

2992. **Stand**, render by 'district' or 'canton'; it = precisely *Reichsstand*, 'estate,' which might be a county, or duchy, or canton, or free city, or bishopric, etc.

2996. **Bannes**, 'ban,' commonly used only of excommunication from the church, but here mainly of outlawry or banishment from the empire.

2997 ff. Agnes was the eldest of the five daughters of Albrecht; her husband, King Andreas III. of Hungary, had died in 1301, leaving her childless; she died in 1364, 83 years old, in the convent of Königsfelden founded by her and the Empress Elizabeth on the site of the murder, with the confiscated property of the families of the murderers. Tradition, which is not supported by modern historical research, makes her vengeance unparalleled in ferocity and relentlessness.

3003. **Zengungen** = *Geschlechter*, 'generations.'

3005. The chroniclers relate such vows of the queen and their fulfillment. Bullinger states that after the surrender of Farwangen, the chief castle of Rudolf von Palm, she caused 63 men, some being nobles, to be beheaded in the forest before her face, and exclaimed, 'Now I am bathing in May dew.' This expression is explained perhaps by the fact that it was in May that Albrecht was killed.

3007. **alsald** here has accent on first syllable, although usually on the second.

3012. **Sich**, dative; 'It is its own dreadful nourishment.'

3023. **was** = *etwas*.

The freedom of election of the Empire was maintained by the Electors choosing on November 29, 1308, not a member of the House of Habsburg, but the Count of Luxemburg, who, as Heinrich VII., reigned until his death in 1313. He confirmed the liberties of the Forest Cantons and protected them against Austria.

3024. **mehrsten** = *meisten*. This superlative from the comparative was early formed, and used through the eighteenth century, but much less than *meist*; it is now to be avoided.

\* **Reichsbote**, 'imperial messenger.'

3031. **bescheid(en)**, same meaning as in l. 553; see note.

3033. **Elisbeth** = Elizabeth, daughter of Meinhard, Duke of Carinthia, Count of Tyrol and Görztz, which countries she brought to Austria. She was married in 1282 and died in 1313 at Vienna.

**alles Gute**, for present usual **alles Gute**.

3036. **Worein** = wo hinein = in welche.

**Hinscheid**, *m.* 'decease,' more common is **das Hinscheiden**.

3038. **Schwyzgerlande** = die drei Waldfstätte.

3040 and 3050. Incomplete lines, as often. The pause of the missing part of the line is filled by appropriate action. Here in the first case the crowd settles into quiet, and in the second a murmur perhaps runs through it.

3041. **berfieht**, see note to l. 2483; here the genitive is replaced by the **daß** clause following.

3053. Cf. ll. 1324 and following.

3054. **Wie — alle — doch gethan**, cf. l. 805.

3062. **rührte . . . an** = würde angerührt haben.

3067. **gemehrt**, 'aggrandized,' 'increased (in wealth and power)'; a mocking allusion to the phrase in the German version of the title of the Emperor, *allezeit Mehrer des Reiches*, which was a mistranslation of the Latin *Imperator semper Augustus*, the last word being taken as immediately from *augere*, 'to increase.'

3068. **frohlocken**, here with genitive, but usually with **über** and accusative.

3073. **will . . . nicht** = 'darf nicht' or 'sann nicht.'

3074. **will** = muß.

**freies Opfer**, cf. l. 2444.

3076. 'We have no further duty to discharge to him (i.e. the dead Emperor).'

3077 and 3078. **Und**, followed by inverted order = 'and while,' 'and though.'

3079. **so**, here adversative, 'still on the other hand.'

3081. Proverbial of tears of sympathy.

3085. Cf. l. 749 and Act V. Sc. 3.

The second division of this scene, beginning with

the appearance of Rösselmann and Stauffacher, gives us the assurance that the Swiss have nothing more to fear. The Emperor, who embodied in himself the hostile designs of the Habsburg family, is dead, and the next Emperor will not belong to that dynasty, but will rather be a friend of Switzerland. The account of the Emperor's death is given with much epic breadth. Rösselmann's comment in l. 2938 is as if he had in mind the Rütli-vow, l. 1452. The letter of the Queen supplements Stauffacher's narration, and the conclusion of the scene exhibits the natural law that controls the relations between rulers and subjects. Stauffacher's thought of Tell and summons to all to go to him prepare for the last scene.

## ACT V. SCENE 2.

The scene is the interior of Tell's house, of which we saw the exterior in Act III. Sc. 1.

The *Gausflur* in such a Swiss house was the 'main room,' into which one entered directly from the outside, and which was kitchen, sitting-room, and entrance-hall all in one.

\* *zeigt ins Freie*, lit. 'points into the open air' = 'shows a view of the open country.'

The time is the same as in the preceding scene.

3089. *der's* = *der das*.

3092. *Ging . . . vorbei*, 'went close by my life.'

3096. Cf. and contrast l. 2086.

3101. *ins Freudenhaus* = 'into a house of rejoicing.'

\* *mit zerflörten* (for usual *verflörten*) *Bügen* = 'with a wild and troubled look.'

3108. *Herr*, archaic for *Gatte*.

3109. *was ist euch*, 'what is the matter with you.'

3112. *Wie auch*, 'however much.'

3116-7. Such appeal to the hearth and to the heads of beloved persons is ancient and classical; compare Homer, *Odyssey*, vii. 153, xiv. 159, xv. 260-1, *Iliad*, ii. 15 and 665, Vergil, *Aeneid*, vi. 364, x. 524.

3124. *schürt mir das Innre zu*, 'stifes (smothers, or chokes, lit., laces up) my inmost feelings.'

\* *hält sich an*, 'checks (or contains) herself,' or 'leans against the door-post.'

3138. A religious custom of ancient times which passed on into the Middle Ages.

The main portion of this scene is introduced by these three incidents, whose motives are of great beauty, but which are merely touched and not elaborated; the joy of the mother and the sons in the father and his coming, the appearance of the monkish figure, with Hedwig's intuitive shrinking, and the coming of Tell with its throng of emotions, in part strongly conflicting.

3158. *Ihr wäret*. 'Do you mean to say that you are'; see note l. 1834.

3162-3. *Herzog von Österreich*; his title is more precisely given in l. 2952.

\* *Johannes Parricida*, 'John the Parricide.' Schiller himself directed that the costume of the Duke should be a monk's white cowl, but that underneath should be a knight's costly attire with a jewelled girdle, which should become visible in connection with his being recognized by Tell.

3168. *eh' ihr* (richtet).

3169. *Vatermordes*, see note to l. 2953.

3170. *du*, instead of *ihr*, probably in contempt.

3191. *So jung*, the real Johannes was only eighteen years old at the time of the crime.

3194. *Des armen Mannes*, genitive in apposition with the genitive of the personal pronoun implied in the possessive adjective *meiner* of the preceding line.

3197. *konnte* and (3198) *bezwang*; see note on l. 2060.

3200. *Leopold*, see l. 2967 and note.

3205. Cf. l. 1346.

3207. *Schluß* for usual *Entschluß*.

3209. *Rachegeister*, lit. 'spirits of vengeance,' = 'Furies'; see note to l. 1700.

3212. Complete the line with *bist*. The language is that of Emperor Heinrich's formal decree of outlawry, as re-

ported by Tschudi: Die Läter seyen Iren Fründen verboten (forbidden), Iren Bienden erloubt (allowed, given over).

3215. **Büße**, as in l. 2135.

3222. **ein Mensch der Sünde**, for ein sündiger Mensch, 'a sinful mortal.'

3229. **entdeckt**, past part. used elliptically, 'if discovered'; cf. l. 653.

3230. Cf. l. 2538.

3232. Cf. l. 1108.

3235. **löset**, 'redeem'; cf. Mark viii. 37. Ober was kann der Mensch geben, damit er seine Seele löse? According to tradition he received absolution from Pope Clement V. at Rome and died as an Augustine monk at Pisa.

3241 ff. The opening of the drama displayed the magnificent scenery about the Lake of the Four Forest Cantons; here now in conclusion is pictured the bold St. Gotthard pass, which in the Middle Ages was the main highway from Germany across the Alps. The same descriptive material for which he was chiefly indebted to Goethe, Joh. v. Müller, and Meiner's *Briefe über die Schweiz*, Schiller used in one of his best lyric poems, Das Berglied.

3243. **wildes** (usually wilden) **Laufes**, adverbial genitive of manner.

3244. **Seh' ich** = Soll ich . . . sehen. Cf. l. 2969.

3247. **begraben** (hat).

3252. **die Schreckensstraße**, 'the road of horror,' is the wild gorge Schöllenen, extending the distance of an hour and a half from the village Göschenen to the Devil's Bridge.

3253. **Windeswehen**, here = Winblawinen, 'drift-avalanches'; see note to l. 1501.

3254. **Joch**, here = 'ridge,' 'saddle,' connecting two peaks and dividing two valleys.

3255. **die Brücke, welche fläubet**, 'the bridge that hangs in drizzling spray' (Th. Martin). This is, according to some, the so-called fläubende Brücke, a hanging bridge of beams and boards, swinging on chains across the deep gorge of the Reuss above the Teufelsbrücke, and constantly wet with spray; others take it to be the Teufelsbrücke itself, which, however,



was not built until long after the time in which the drama plays; of course the poet was free to carry back his own time into the past, as he does in l. 3258 and elsewhere.

3258. **Felsenthor**, 'rocky gate,' the so-called *Urnerloch*, 'hole of Uri.' An anachronism, as it was not until the year 1707 that this tunnel, more than 200 feet long, was made through the rock.

3260. **Thal der Freude** = *Urferenthal*.

3264. **deines Reiches Boden**, i.e. Italy including the Canton Tessin (*Ticino*), as part of the Holy Roman Empire.

3266. On the St. Gotthard are a number of small lakes, according to *Bädeker* about thirty. Of seven of these, near the Hospice, *Scheuchzer* states that during the whole year they remain unchanged in depth; hence the epithet **ewig**.

3267. **von des Himmels Strömen**, i.e. from snow and rain.

3269. **ein andrer Strom**, i.e. the river Tessin (*Ticino*).

3270. **auch das gelobte Land**, 'for you the Promised Land'; where you will find peace. The participle *gelobt* in this standing designation of the Holy Land belongs historically to the verb *geloben*, 'to promise, to vow,' but is commonly felt now as belonging to the verb *loben* in the sense of 'to praise.'

\* **bedeutet ihn mit der Hand**, 'makes a sign to him with his hand.'

In this interview between Tell and Parricida Schiller's intention seems to have been twofold: to bring before us with utmost vividness the reality of the death of the Emperor, and to show Tell after the shooting of Gessler as not only altogether without remorse, but serenely confident and rejoicing in it as an act of divine justice. But here again the poet's execution diverges from his intention, and our interest in Parricida and our sympathy are so aroused as seriously to interfere with Schiller's design. The scene is in itself strong and beautiful.

\* **Letzte Scene**, cf. ll. 749, 3085.

3286. **Bürgerin**, here = 'fellow-citizen.'

While Scene 1 belongs mainly to the Yeomen-plot,

although we learn too about Rudenz and Bertha, and Scene 2 belongs exclusively to the Tell-plot, this 3d and final scene unites the representatives of all three plots in a picture symbolical of liberty, union, and happiness, and of the nation's gratitude to Tell, the savior of his country. In the last lines we find further fulfillment of Attinghausen's prophecy. The noblewoman, seeking legal protection, asks to be received into the Confederation. Rudenz abolishes serfdom, and with that the form of civilization which depended on it. Thus we see a twofold movement beginning with these representatives of the nobility; on the one hand the nobles move down towards the middle class, the yeomen and burghers, while on the other the serfs are lifted up into full citizenship. The drama ends with the full harmony of liberty, equality, fraternity.

Act V is not superfluous, for this work is not a tragedy but a "Schauspiel," a serious drama, which must give us an harmonious adjustment of its conflict of interest and confidence in the permanence of peace and joy.

The Tell-plot, regarded as a purely tragic plot, does indeed have its catastrophe and end in the death of Gessler in Act IV. Sc. 3, but after all we are not reconciled until we see Tell with his family and his people in Act V. Scenes 2 and 3, which thus contain the conclusion of the catastrophe. With the end of Act IV the two other plots imperatively demand continuation. The Yeomen-plot has the conclusion of its descending action and its catastrophe in Act V. Scenes 1 and 3. The Nobles-plot has its descending action and its catastrophe in the same scenes. Without them we should have no assurance as to the fate of Bertha and the relations of the nobility to the yeomanry, and the Rütli plans would seem to have come to naught so far as concerns the active participation of the common people. The execution of the Parricida scene is, how-

ever, misleading, and the act is as a whole more epic, picturesque, than dramatic.



SEAL OF ZÜRICH, 1291.

## APPENDIX.

### PRINCIPAL DATES OF THE LIFE

OF

**Johann Christoph Friedrich [von] Schiller.**

- 1759, Nov. 10. Birth at Marbach in Württemberg.  
1765-1768. Family resided in Lorch.  
1768-1773. Pupil of Latin School in Ludwigsburg. Preparation for theology.  
1772, Easter. Confirmation.  
1773-1780. Pupil of the "Karlsschule," until 1775 in the Château Solitude, thereafter in Stuttgart. Law and medicine. Military surgeon. Early poems and *Die Räuber*.  
1781, May. Publication of *Die Räuber*.  
1782, Sept. 22. Flight from Stuttgart.  
1782-1785. Wanderings and residence in Mannheim, Oggersheim, Bauerbach, and Mannheim.  
1782. *Fiesko* written; published in 1783.  
1782-1783. *Kabale und Liebe* written; published in 1784.  
1783-1787. *Don Karlos* written; published in 1787.  
1785-1787. Residence in Leipzig and Dresden. Study of history.  
1787-1789. Residence in Weimar and in Volkstedt near Rudolstadt.  
1788. Publication of *Geschichte des Abfalls der vereinigten Niederlande von der spanischen Regierung*.  
1789. Appointed professor in the university of Jena, where he now resided.  
1790, Feb. 22. Married to Charlotte von Lengefeld.



- 1790 and thereafter. Writing of *Geschichte des dreissig-jährigen Krieges*, published complete in 1793. Editorial labors. Study of philosophy.
1794. Beginning of friendship with Goethe.
1795. *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschen*.
1796. *Xenien*.
1797. Ballads and short poems.
- 1797-1799. *Wallenstein* written: *W.'s Lager* first performed in October 1798, *Die Piccolomini* in January 1799, and *W.'s Tod* in April 1799; the whole published in June 1800.
- 1799-1800. *Maria Stuart* written; published in 1801.
- 1799, Dec. Removal to Weimar.
- 1800-1801. *Die Jungfrau von Orleans* written; published end of 1801.
1802. Patent of nobility.
- 1802-1803. *Die Braut von Messina* written; published 1803.
- 1803-1804. *Wilhelm Tell* written; published 1804.
- 1805, May 9. Death.

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**I**n nomine domini Amen. Quoniam plurimi ex vobis publice prouident  
vobis de Switz ac punitis hominum inuentionem vallis inferiori  
bona pmisserunt tunc sibi assiste auxilio suo quibus ac favore  
irruerunt violentia molestia ac iniuriam ipsorum et rebus malis  
et iniquis p[ro]p[ri]is q[uod] suis ipse malignis resistit iuris vindicem  
Ira enim q[uod] quibus ho[m]i[n]is sui nos aduocem dno suo suerit nec tunc

FACSIMILE OF TEXT OF THE LEAGUE OF 1291.

(To face p. 287.)

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#### LATIN OF THE FACSIMILE.

(The bracketed words do not appear in the facsimile.)

In nomine domini Amen. Honestati consulitur et utilitati publice providetur, dum [pacta quietis et pacis statu debito solidantur. Noverint igitur universi, quod homines vallis *Uranie*, universitasque] vallis de *Switz*, ac communitas hominum *intramontanorum vallis inferioris*, [maliciam temporis attendentes, ut se et sua magis defendere valeant et in statu debito melius conservare, fide] bona promiserunt, invicem sibi assistere auxilio, consilio quolibet ac favore [personis et rebus, infra valles et extra, toto posse, toto nisu, contra omnes ac singulos, qui eos vel alicui de ipsis aliquam] intulerint violenciam, molestiam, aut iniuriam, in personis et rebus malum [quodlibet machinando, ac in omnem eventum quelibet universitas promisit alteri accurrere, cum necesse fuerit ad succerendum] et in expensis propriis, prout opus fuerit, contra inpetus malignorum resistere, iniurias vindicare, [prestito super hiis corporaliter iuramento, absque dolo servandis, antiquam confederationis formam iuramento vallatam presentibus innovando,] Ita tamen, quod quilibet homo iuxta sui nominis conditionem domino suo convenienter subesse tene[atur et servire.] . . .

#### ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF THE WHOLE DOCUMENT.

In the name of the Lord, Amen! It is honorable and of benefit to the public weal that compacts of safety and peace be fittingly confirmed. Know all men therefore that the men of the valley Uri, the community of the valley of Schwyz, and the communities of the men of the lower valley

of Unterwalden, in view of the evil times, in order that they may be better able to protect and keep in good condition themselves and their property, have in good faith promised mutually to assist each other with aid, counsel, and good will, whether persons or things be involved, both within the valleys and without, with all power and with all zeal, against all and every one who may do them or any of theirs any violence, oppression, or injury in respect of property or person; and each community has promised to assist the others in every case, and to come to their aid as soon as it may be necessary and this at its own expense, as far as it is necessary to resist the attacks of malevolent persons, to avenge injuries; they have pledged themselves to this agreement by an oath with raised hands, that they will keep it without guile; they renew by these presents and with a sacred oath confirm the ancient confederation; but in this sense that every man according to his condition shall be held to be duly subject to his lord and to serve him. With common counsel we have unanimously promised, decreed, and ordained that in the above-mentioned valleys we do not and never will accept a judge who has gained his office by favor or by money, or who is not our fellow-inhabitant or fellow-citizen. If, however, a dispute should arise between any of the parties to this league, then shall the more prudent [representatives] of the parties meet together, to adjust the difference amicably, as shall seem expedient to them, and whichever party shall reject their decision, the other parties shall oppose. But above all there exists among them the law that, whoever shall have slain another murderously and without cause—if he be seized—shall lose his life, in case he is not able to prove his innocence of such an offence, and if he escapes, he shall never be allowed to return. But whosoever receives or shelters such an evil-doer, shall be banished from our valleys, until he be with good reason recalled by the parties to this league. But whoever shall injure by fire another in the league, by day or by night, treacherously and secretly, he shall never be held to be a fellow-citizen. And whoever protects and shelters such an evil-doer within our valleys

shall give satisfaction to the injured man. If further any one in the league shall rob or injure in any way the things of another, and the property of the guilty man can be seized within our valleys, it shall be used in just compensation of the injury. Further, no one shall take as security the property of another, unless he be proven debtor or guarantor, and then it shall be done only with the sanction of the proper judge. Moreover, every one shall obey his own judge, and—if it should be necessary—determine his own judge within the land, before whom he shall answer for himself. And if any one should show disobedience to this judge, or if by his contumacy any one in the league should be injured, then all in the league shall be bound to compel the aforesaid delinquent to render the satisfaction adjudged. But if between one and another of the parties to the league war or discord should break out, and one party be unwilling to render right or satisfaction, then shall the other parties be bound to shelter and protect the other party.—The above-written agreements, wisely ordained for the common weal, shall, God willing, be perpetual. In testimony of which the present instrument at the request of the afore-mentioned was drawn up and confirmed by the seals of the three afore-mentioned communities and valleys. Done in the year of the Lord MCCLXXX and first, in the beginning of the month of August.

#### FAMILIAR QUOTATIONS FROM "WILHELM TELL."

1. Greif an mit Gott! Dem Nächsten muß man helfen. (Kuoni, l. 107.)
2. Wo's not thut, läßt sich alles wagen. (Tell, l. 136.)
3. Der brave Mann denkt an sich selbst zuletzt. (Tell, l. 139.)
4. Vom sichern Ort läßt sich's gemächlich raten. (Ruodi, l. 141.)
5. Ich hab' gethan, was ich nicht lassen konnte. (Tell, l. 160.)
6. Der kluge Mann baut vor. (Gertrud, l. 274.)
7. Dem Mutigen hilft Gott. (Gertrud, l. 313.)
8. Unbilliges erträgt kein edles Herz. (Gertrud, l. 317.)
9. Die Unschuld hat im Himmel einen Freund. (Gertrud, l. 324.)
10. Was Hände bauten, können Hände stürzen. (Tell, l. 387.)
11. Das schwere Herz wird nicht durch Worte leicht. (Tell, l. 418.)

12. Die schnellen Herrscher sind's, die kurz regieren. (Tell, l. 422.)
13. Dem Friedlichen gewährt man gern den Frieden. (Tell, l. 428.)
14. Die Schlange sticht nicht ungereizt. (Tell, l. 429.)
15. Beim Schiffbruch hilft der einzelne sich leichter. (Tell, l. 433.)
16. Ein jeder zählt nur sicher auf sich selbst. (Tell, l. 435.)
17. Verbunden werden auch die Schwachen mächtig. (Stauffacher, l. 436.)
18. Der Starke ist am mächtigsten allein. (Tell, l. 437.)
19. O, mächtig ist der Trieb des Vaterlands! (Attinghausen, l. 848.)
20. Aus Vaterland, aus teure schließ dich an,  
Das halte fest mit deinem ganzen Herzen!  
Hier sind die starken Wurzeln deiner Kraft. (Attinghausen, ll. 922-4.)
21. Es lebt ein andersdenkendes Geschlecht. (Attinghausen, l. 954.)
22. Reblüchtheit gedeiht in jedem Stande. (Stauffacher, l. 1085.)
23. Eine Grenze hat Tyrannenmacht. (Stauffacher, l. 1275.)
24. Schrecklich immer,  
Auch in gerechter Sache, ist Gewalt. (Reding, ll. 1320-1.)
25. Man muß dem Augenblick auch was vertrauen. (Reding, l. 1438.)
26. Wir wollen sein ein einzig Volk von Brüdern,  
In keiner Not uns trennen und Gefahr. (Rösselmann, ll. 1448-9.)
27. Früh übt sich, was ein Meister werden will. (Tell, l. 1481.)
28. Die Art im Haus erspart den Zimmermann. (Tell, l. 1514.)
29. Ein jeder wird besteuert nach Vermögen. (Tell, l. 1524.)
30. Wer gar zu viel bedenkt, wird wenig leisten. (Tell, l. 1532.)
31. Der ist mir der Meister,  
Der seiner Kunst gewiß ist überall. (Gessler, ll. 1940-1.)
32. [Und] allzustraff gespannt, zerspringt der Bogen. (Rudenz, l. 1996.)
33. Das Alte stürzt, es ändert sich die Zeit,  
Und neues Leben blüht aus den Ruinen. (Attinghausen, ll. 2425-6.)
34. Seid einig — einig — einig. (Attinghausen, l. 2451.)
35. Es bringt die Zeit ein anderes Geseß. (Melchthal, l. 2551.)
36. [Nach' deine Rechnung mit dem Himmel, Vogt,  
Fort mußt du,] deine Uhr ist abgelaufen. (Tell, ll. 2566-7.)
37. Es lebt ein Gott, zu strafen und zu rächen. (Tell, l. 2596.)
38. Ich habe keinen zweiten zu versenden. (Tell, l. 2608.)
39. Dem Schwachen ist sein Stachel auch gegeben. (Tell, l. 2675.)
40. Es kann der Frömmste nicht im Frieden bleiben,  
Wenn es dem bösen Nachbar nicht gefällt. (Tell, ll. 2682-3.)
41. Rache trägt keine Frucht. (Fürst, l. 3012.)
42. Die Liebe will ein freies Opfer sein. (Fürst, l. 3074.)

43. Wer Thränen ernten will, muß Liebe säen. (Melchthal, l. 3081.)  
 44. Daß Unglück spricht gewaltig zu dem Herzen. (Hedwig, l. 3123.)

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From K. Heinrich von Stein: *Goethe und Schiller, Beiträge zur Ästhetik der deutschen Klassiker*, pp. 99 ff.

The very subject-matter of *Tell* suggested that the processes of nature be drawn into direct participation in the action. The simplest conceivable means of giving poetic life could here be chosen, viz., that of bringing upon the stage the great phenomena of nature, which of themselves speak to the feelings and in so far are truly poetical. This was in the present case possible and necessary because the subject-matter is an event produced by the particular conditions of the land.

When the curtain rises for the drama *Tell* we ought to see with our own eyes the picture of a wonderful landscape: the scene of the action, Lake Uri, from the shore of Unterwalden, Schwyz opposite, in the distance to the right the shore of Flüelen. Songs are heard, first from the lake, then from the heights. These songs ought to be sung with great expression, in long, full notes. The landscape must speak to us, make itself known to us; eye and ear must have time enough to become familiar with it. The character of this picture unfolded before us at the beginning, is deep peace, fullest beauty and loveliness:

„Es lächelt der See, er ladet zum Bade;  
 Der Knabe schlief ein am grünen Gestade,  
 Da hört er ein Klängen, wie Flöten so süß,  
 Wie Stimmen der Engel im Paradies.“

Into this land murder enters. Clouds have gathered, a storm is rising; now Baumgarten rushes in, with his horrible, necessary, just accomplished deed in his every look and gesture. This is the problem of the drama: the tremendous possibilities of human action disturb the peace of nature. Malice and wickedness have made their abode in this pastoral paradise. A fearful struggle is to be fought out before us. Will the deep, healthy basis of what is





solidly and originally natural be stronger than the arbitrary will of degenerate men? Most earnest is the conflict; three times in the course of the drama is the decisive act an assassination. As the depths of the lake are brought up, surging and storming before us, so is it in *Tell* with the relation of man to nature. Shall we reach the other shore, —repose and peace in higher and safer form? This is the question, this the problem. This is also in this very scene the first task in which Tell proves himself. We feel, this is the man with whose aid the anxious passage will be made and that great struggle decided.

Afterwards it is again a storm that delivers Tell from Gessler. It is one of these sudden Föhn-storms which are peculiar to Lake Uri. Because Tell knows them, how they come and go, he is freed from his fetters and placed at the helm. The essential character of this natural phenomenon becomes the occasion of all his following success. . . .

The broad foundation of the whole work of liberation is the meeting at the Rütli. Again we have the action preceded by a detailed description of the landscape. A moonlight night; lake and glacier gleam and shimmer, they alone; all the rest, the rocky precipices, the alpine meadows are veiled in darkness. . . . While Melchthal is talking with his companions, they suddenly catch sight of a lunar rainbow above the lake. "Es leben viele, die das nicht gesehn"—that is, a very special phenomenon, bordering on the miraculous. One might doubt for an instant whether this accumulation of detail might not involve surrender to the mere material spectacle of the beauty of natural scenery. But this accumulation is rather the representation of the poetic intention, that we are to feel distinctly that Nature, in expression and in action, is cooperating in the work which is commencing before us. The sunrise at the end of the Rütli-scene is the grandest element in this participation of external nature. . . . The poet prescribes that, the stage having first been left entirely empty, our entire attention shall be attracted and held fast by the spectacle of the sun rising above the snow-clad mountains.

This is the background before which the drama plays,

or, better, the soil from which it grows. For the human occurrences of the drama are themselves represented as great natural phenomena in breadth, fullness, and weight. A collective whole, the Swiss people, is the hero of the piece. This we learn above all in the scene of whose natural setting we just spoke. At the Rütli a conspiracy occurs. When Goethe gathered from his conversations with Schiller that the latter would represent the whole people in his play, he caused Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar* to be played for his friend, thus affording the latter the finest and most grateful stimulus, as Schiller himself assures us. If we compare *Tell* and *Cæsar* in respect of the organization of the conspiracy, we find a great contrast. In *Cæsar* the feeling is that of a sultry, stormy night: the gloomy pondering of Brutus, a fate ensnaring his every step and drawing him inextricably into its nets, this is chiefly what we learn of the origin of the enterprise. The conspirators are almost all selfishly interested; after the deed, they are at variance with one another. . . . And now we pass from this to the Rütli, into that clear, moonlight night: the morning breeze is rising from the lake and above the mountains the sun announces his coming. All these men stand here in the conviction of their right. In *Cæsar* the common purpose is purely negative, the murder of the tyrant. Here it is quite different. The negation involved is indeed mentioned, but is not made the main issue; Rösselmann, the priest, by the episode of his interruption makes hostility to Austria an element of the great work. This itself, however, is altogether positive—the foundation of the confederation, the constitution of a community embracing all the Cantons. This is the chief action of the Rütli-scene. Stauffacher leads up to this constitution by his narrative of the common origin of the inhabitants of the Cantons here represented. On natural foundations, on a common ground, is the work to rest. The history of this people as a whole we are to hear; the deed of this people we are to witness.—In this regard the thought of the poet requires the fifth act to be represented as the highest climax of the drama. The ringing of the bells, the signal-fires,

the destruction of Keep Uri—all this must crowd upon the spectator with impressive power ; we must *see* the people in its deed, in its success.

Tell himself is understood only if we give heed to the gravity, the weight of his decisions and his deed ; this very greatness or breadth of the inner processes of Tell's soul is what makes him to be the representative of the collective Swiss nation. Why does he not at once shoot the governor when the latter demands the shot at the apple ? Why does Tell speak so much, when, fully resolved upon his deed, he awaits Gessler ? Just in his having so much to say to himself at this moment does his character consist. That only an extreme case, not Gessler's demand—"er ist mein Herr und meines Kaisers Vogt"—but only the possible death of his son enables him to slay the tyrant,—just in this does the character of Tell's deed consist. If Gessler had not been his lord and master in that strict, religious sense, which his obedience to that awful command reveals, Tell could not by killing Gessler become a deliverer ; Gessler's power is an actual authority, whose seat is not in the lances of his men-at-arms—"eure Macht ist aus" is the cry of the people after Gessler's death—but in the conscience of the Swiss people, in Tell's conscience. Only of the supreme need of such faithful, intense souls can the actual deed of deliverance be born.

This deed of deliverance is, however, a murder, which necessarily burdens the conscience with bonds, whose breaking we are now likewise to witness. Tell returns—without his crossbow—to his wife and children. Into the joy of their meeting no reproach really enters, for Tell is able to answer every reproach of Hedwig, but there does enter into it serious sadness. This sadness is intensified by the appearance of Parricida ; it is not dispelled until at the end, by the appearance of the rejoicing people. The significance of this scene is that of Tell's absolution. "Above and beyond man (the individual) there is only one thing higher: mankind," says Wagner. Tell as an individual we could not conceive as living quietly on after his deed, however righteous it was ; but we can thus conceive him as

the father of his children, in the midst of his own people. The spirit of this people wrought the deed by means of his arm ; now at the end the love of the assembled people absolves him.

Herewith we behold the spirit of the people, the community of the people achieving a victory over wickedness and arbitrariness, and restored to harmony with the calm, healthy foundations of its natural home. This victory is an ideal. . . .

. . . . .  
A common state, to which the individual may rightly and joyously sacrifice his personal being, is the highest form of existence which we can conceive: . . .

The gain for all time which is to be had from such a poetic production as *Tell* we would designate as confidence in the ideal. Such a work realizes the reconciling power of a highly intensified consciousness, and this power assures us of the noblest possibilities in the collective life of mankind. The height and breadth of such a work inspires in us certainty of feeling, definiteness of our ideal hope. . . . For Schiller the ideal is nature itself, truth itself. There are no phenomena of reality before which it pales into mere seeming. There are no forces in the world before which it loses its original, natural power. In poetic figure, just this is the theme of *Tell*. Here the ideal rises up like one of those snow-clad Swiss mountains, whence proceed the liberty and all noble significance of the people that has sprung from them.

From John Addington Symonds: *Our Life in the Swiss Highlands* (1892), pp. 64 ff.—The title of this essay, written in the summer of 1888, is *Snow, Frost, Storm, and Avalanche*.

There are several sorts of avalanches; which have to be distinguished and which are worthy of separate descriptions. One is called *Staub-Lawine* or Dust-Avalanche. This descends when snow is loose and has recently fallen. It is attended with a whirlwind, which lifts the snow from a whole mountain-side and drives it onward through the air. It advances in a straight line, overwhelming every obstacle,

mowing forests down like sedge, "leaping" (as an old peasant once expressed it in my hearing) "from hill to hill," burying men, beasts, and dwellings, and settling down at last into a formidable compact mass without color and without outline. The snow which forms these Staub-Lawinen is dry and finely powdered. When it comes to rest upon the earth, it immediately hardens into something very like the consistency of ice, wrapping the objects which have been borne onward by its blast tightly round in a firm implacable clasp. A man or horse seized by a Staub-Lawine, if the breath has not been blown out of his body in the air, has it squeezed out by the even clinging pressure of consolidating particles. . . .

Another sort of avalanche is called the *Schlag-Lawine*, or Stroke-Avalanche. It falls generally in springtime, when the masses of winter snow have been loosened by warm winds or sodden by heavy rainfalls. The snow is not whirled into the air, but slips along the ground, following the direction given by ravines and gullies, or finding a way forward through the forest by its sheer weight. Lumbering and rolling, gathering volume as they go from all the barren fells within the reach of their tenacious undermining forces, these "slogging" avalanches push blindly onward till they come to rest upon a level. Then they spread themselves abroad, and heap their vast accumulated masses by the might of pressure from behind up into pyramids and spires. They bear the aspect of a glacier with its seracs, or of a lava-stream with its bristling ridges; and their skirts are plumed with stately pine-trees, nodding above the ruin they have wrought. Woe to the fragile buildings, to the houses and stables, which they meet upon their inert groveling career! These are carried with them, incorporated, used as battering-rams. Grooving like the snout of some behemoth, the snow dislodges giants of the forest, and forces them to act like ploughs upon its path. You may see tongues and promontories of the avalanche protruding from the central body, and carried far across frozen lakes or expanses of meadow by the help of some huge pine or larch. The *Schlag-Lawine* is usually grayish

white and softer in substance than its more dreadful sister, the Staub-Lawine—that daughter of the storm, with the breath of the tornado in her brief delirious energy. It is often distinguished by a beautiful bluish color, as of opaque ice, in the fantastically toppling rounded towers which crown it; whereas the Staub-Lawine looks like marble of Carrara, and presents a uniform curved surface after it has fallen. Though the Schlag-Lawine closely resembles a glacier at first sight, practiced eyes detect the difference at once by the dulled hue which I have mentioned and by the blunted outlines of the pyramids. It might be compared to a glacier which had been sucked or breathed upon by some colossal fiery dragon. Less time has gone to make it; it is composed of less elaborated substance, it has less of permanence in its structure than a glacier; and close inspection shows that it will not survive the impact of soft southern winds in May. In extent these Schlag-Lawinen are enormous. I have crossed some which measured a thousand feet in breadth and more than sixty feet in depth. All road-marks, telegraph-posts, parapets, etc., are, of course, abolished. The trees, if trees there were upon their track, have been obliterated. Broken stumps, snapped off like matches, show where woods once waved to heaven. Valleys are made even with the ridges which confined them. Streams are bridged over and converted into temporary lakes by the damming up of water.

A species of the *Schlag-Lawine* may be distinguished, to which the name of *Grund-Lawine*, or Ground-Avalanche, shall be given. There is no real distinction between *Schlag-* and *Grund-Lawine*. I only choose to differentiate them here because of marked outward differences to the eye. The peculiarity of a *Grund-Lawine* consists in the amount of earth and rubbish carried down by it. This kind is filthy and disreputable. It is colored brown or slaty-gray by the rock and soil with which it is involved. Blocks of stone emerge in horrid bareness from the dreary waste of dirty snow and slush of water which compose it; and the trees, which have been so unlucky as to stand upon its path are splintered, bruised, rough-handled in a hideous fashion.

The Staub-Lawine is fury-laden like a fiend in its first swirling onset, flat and stiff like a corpse in its ultimate repose of death, containing men and beasts and trees entombed beneath its stern unwrinkled taciturnity of marble. The Schlag-Lawine is picturesque, rising into romantic spires and turrets, with erratic pine-plumed firths protruding upon sleepy meadows. It may even lie pure and beautiful, heaving in pallid billows at the foot of majestic mountain-slopes where it has injured nothing. But the Grund-Lawine is ugly, spiteful like an asp, tatterdemalion like a street Arab; it is the worst, the most wicked of the sisterhood. To be killed by it would mean a ghastly death by scrunching and throttling, as in some grinding machine, with nothing of noble and impressive in the winding-sheet of foul snow and débris heaped above the mangled corpse.

I ought to mention a fourth sort of avalanche, which is called *Schnee-Rutsch* or Snow-Slip. It does not differ materially from the Schlag-Lawine except in dimension, which is smaller, and in the fact that it may fall at any time and in nearly all kinds of weather by the mere detachment of some trifling mass of snow. The Schnee-Rutsch slides gently, expanding in a fan-like shape upon the slope it has to traverse, till it comes to rest upon a level. Small as the slip may be, it is very dangerous; for it rises as it goes, catches the legs of a man, lifts him off his feet, and winds itself around him in a quiet but inexorable embrace.

. . .

A special form of the snow-slip is known as *Wind-Schild*. When the force of the wind has drifted a mass of snow together on an overhanging slope, or heaped it up all along the ledges of a beetling precipice, the mass, too heavy to sustain itself in that position, slips downward like snow from a steep roof. This is called a Wind-Schild, and the sudden fall of such a snow-slip may overwhelm men, horses, and sledges, if it strikes them at a point where they can be carried off their legs and borne beyond the barriers of the road. The Wind-Schild gives no warning of its approach.

. . .

I have frequently mentioned the blast which avalanches

bring with them, and which runs before the snow-mass like a messenger of death. This phenomenon of the "Lawinen-Dunst," as it is called, deserves some illustration. The fact is well authenticated, but its results seem almost incredible. Therefore I will confine myself to details on which I can positively rely. A carter, whom I knew well for an honest fellow, told me that he was driving his sledge with two horses on the Albula Pass when an avalanche fell upon the opposite side of the gorge. It did not catch him. But the blast carried him and his horses and the sledge at one swoop over into the deep snow, whence they emerged with difficulty. . . . In order to understand the force of the Lawinen-Dunst, we must bear in mind that hundreds of thousands of tons of snow are suddenly set in motion in contracted chasms. The air displaced before these solid masses acts upon objects in their way like breath blown from a pea-shooter. From certain appearances in the torn and mangled trees which droop disconsolately above ravines down which an avalanche has thundered, it would also appear that the draught created by its passage acts like a vortex, and sucks in the stationary vegetation on either hand.

I will follow up these general details with a circumstantial account of what occurred here on February 6th last [1888]. The Fluela Pass, which connects Davos with the Lower Engadine, was closed to traffic on that day. But a man with whom I was acquainted, called Anton Broher (nicknamed the "Schaufel-Bauer" or "Knavé of Spades," because of his black bushy beard), had started for the pass before this fact was generally known. Just before noon an avalanche caught him at a spot where avalanches rarely, if ever, fall, within a short distance of the inn at Tschuggen. An eye-witness saw him carried by the blast, together with his horse and sledge, 200 yards in the air across the mountain stream. The snow which followed buried him. He was subsequently dug out dead, with his horse dead, and the sledge beside him. The harness had been blown to ribbons in the air, for nothing could be found of it except the headpiece on the horse's neck. . . . When I reached



the avalanche which carried Anton Broher across the water and killed him, I was astonished by its smallness and by the space he had traversed in the air. Yet there was the hole upon the other side, close to the stream, out of which his corpse, with horse and sledge, had been excavated.

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